ADEN

[p. III
title page]

by

Sir Tom Hickinbotham

800

K.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., C.I.E., O.B.E.

with a Foreword by
Lt.-Colonel Sir Bernard Reilly
K.C.M.G., C.I.E., O.B.E.

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Contents

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PAGE
AUTHOR'S NOTE vii
FOREWORD by Sir Bernard Reilly ix

PART I

CHAP.
I. ENTRANCE 1
II. EARLY DAYS 7
III. THE PORT TRUST AND THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL 26
IV. FIRST ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE PROTECTORATE 49
V. YEMEN RELATIONS 66

PART II

VI. SECURITY, COLONY AND PROTECTORATE 81
VII. TRAVELS IN THE PROTECTORATE 109
VIII. PROTECTORATE DEVELOPMENT 147
IX. FEDERATION AND THE FUTURE 162
X. YEMEN RELATIONS AND THE 1955 REVOLT 175
XI. LABOUR RELATIONS IN THE COLONY 182
XII. THE MAJORITY COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL PARTIES 192
XIII. MINORITY COMMUNITIES AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT 201
XIV. THE LIGHTER SIDE 215
XV. EXIT 224
XVI. FROM THE "UPPER CIRCLE" 1958 228
INDEX 241

List of Illustrations

A Mosque in Saiyun—the Hadhramaut *Frontispiece*

Facing page

Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammed Mackawwi, K.B.E. 18

The Audhali Escarpment 19

Sand dunes of the Ruba-al-Khali in the northern reaches of the Protectorate 19

Imam Ahmad bin Yahya—the King of the Yemen 34

H.R.H. Saif al Islam al Hassan, then Prime Minister of the Yemen, and myself at Aden Airport 35

A Tribal Guardsman 114

Siddiq al Hassani of the Government Guards, leader of my six personal guards 115

Qadhi Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami—Yemeni Governor of Beidhi province 130

Al Qara—tribesmen swarming round the Mosque after our arrival 131

The well below a Hadhrami Bedouin Legion post in the northern desert 146

The Kathini Sultan's palace at Saiyun 146

Government Housing Scheme 1955–56. Blocks of flats for workers and their families 147

Author's Note

THE purpose of this book is to make available to people in the United Kingdom an accurate picture of the country and people of the Colony and the Protectorate of Aden, and by so doing to serve the people of those territories among whom I have spent many interesting and happy years. 121

I have tried to practise a moderation my friends may scarcely recognise as characteristic but will, I trust, applaud, while at the same time producing a clear and definitive sketch.

My thanks are due to the Colonial Office for kindly allowing me access to my own despatches, and to Mr. N. J. V. Watt, the Public Relations Officer in Aden, who provided me with material without which I should have been much handicapped.

Colchester
May 1958

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Foreword

by Lt.-Colonel Sir Bernard Reilly, K.C.M.G., C.I.E., O.B.E.

ADEN has been much in the news in the year 1958 and 800 public interest has been roused by the growing importance of the Colony and by the troubles that have beset it, and still more its immediate neighbour, the group of small Arab States which form the Aden Protectorate. To most travellers to the East Aden was known in the past merely as a port of call, hot and unattractive with its background of barren rock and sand, though some could sense its latent vitality and see a beauty in the heights and promontories encircling its harbour and their vivid colouring under a sunset light. More recently there has been an increasing awareness that in the changing conditions of the Middle Eastern and Eastern world Aden has sprung into the front rank as a fuelling port and as a commercial and strategic centre on the sea and air routes between Europe, Asia and East Africa. It has also become one of the points round which a political contest for influence and control is being waged between the rival competing forces of the modern world. The publicity and attention which the affairs of Aden now receive have led to a demand for more knowledge and understanding of what sort of place it is.

Sir Tom Hickinbotham is especially well qualified to supply 114 this knowledge for he has given many years of public service to Aden and has worked for it in varying capacities. He, as a young Indian Army officer who had joined the Indian Political Service, first came to Aden in the days when it was still administered from India as Personal Assistant to the then Resident, who happened to be myself. As for many others,

[p. viii is blank]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957);
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Foreword

114 the first impression made on him by Aden was not favourable, and I have what in retrospect is a rather diverting recollection of how, about a week after his arrival, he asked leave to explain to me that he did not like the look of Aden, the look of its people or, in fact, anything about it, and that he wished to be sent back to India as soon as possible. As again in the case of many, indeed most, others whose lot it has been to live in Aden for some time, his feelings were soon reversed, and he developed an interest in Aden and its welfare and an affection for its people, which they, when they came to know him, warmly reciprocated.

The second appointment which Hickinbotham held in Aden gave him the opportunity to come into closer touch with the inhabitants of the Colony and their affairs. He became Civil Secretary, a post which has since disappeared but was analogous to the present Chief Secretaryship. To his responsibilities as Civil Secretary were added from time to time a surprising number of other divergent duties, which included Judge of the Sessions Court, Inspector of Education and Superintendent of Customs, Salt and Excise.

Those functions must have helped him to expand his wide
[504] understanding of various aspects of Aden life. Next, after an interval of some years spent in countries neighbouring the Persian Gulf, Hickinbotham returned to Aden as Chairman of the Port Trust, a post of vital importance to the Colony whose commercial prosperity was founded on and is still dependent upon the activities of the port. It had been usual for this appointment to be held by an engineer, a qualification which Hickinbotham, in spite of his versatility, did not possess. But during the time that he had previously lived in Aden he had acquired an intimate acquaintance with the life of the harbour through his personal interest in ships and boats and in the local people who earned their living in Aden waters.
[123]. This and a natural grasp of business and finance enabled him to preside over the semi-autonomous Port Trust Board with complete success, and this further widening of his practical dealing with Aden's administration led in 1951 to his appointment as Governor of Aden.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1953 MM1 Aden MM1

Foreword

Now at last Hickinbotham occupied a position in which the 114
scope of his responsibilities included the Aden Protectorate as 123
well as the Colony of Aden, for as Governor and Commander-
in-Chief he was Governor of the Protectorate as well as
Governor of the Colony. It has been thought by some that the 648
term "Governor of the Aden Protectorate" is a misnomer, for 643
it is not the policy of the British Government to govern the
Protectorate directly, but to leave the control of its internal
affairs to the local Arab Rulers in treaty relations with Her
Majesty's Government. Under these treaties the British
Government are bound to give the Rulers protection against
external attack, and through the Governor of Aden the Rulers
also receive, when necessary, assistance in preserving internal
security and also advice and financial help. The Colony of [131]
Aden is a small, mainly urban, territory of about 75 square [133]
miles: the Protectorate is a largely mountainous and thinly
populated area with comparatively small fertile cultivable parts [134]
and is about the same size as the United Kingdom. The role of [161]
the Governor in the Protectorate thus differs fundamentally 643
from his position in the Colony, where he is the head of a
direct administration, and the problems with which he has to
deal in the two areas are very different.

The Arabs of the Protectorate tribes made a natural appeal 114
to Hickinbotham, as they have done to many other British [123]
officers and others whose work has brought them into contact
with them and who can understand their outlook on life. In this book he has given a fascinating account of the Protectorate and its people based on practical sympathy and intimate knowledge, as well as an interesting description of Aden Colony and his experience in it in successive capacities. Sir Tom's position as Governor of the Aden Colony and Protectorate also necessitated his playing an active part in dealing with the question of British relations with the Yemen, the independent Arab Kingdom which lies to the north of the western part of the Protectorate, and his book includes informative chapters about this troublesome problem.

It is a pleasure to me to commend this work to all those 000
who seek reliable information about this part of the world and

a perception of the attraction that it can exercise for those who, like the writer of the book, and I should like to add myself, have had the happiness to serve in it and to know its people.

May 1958

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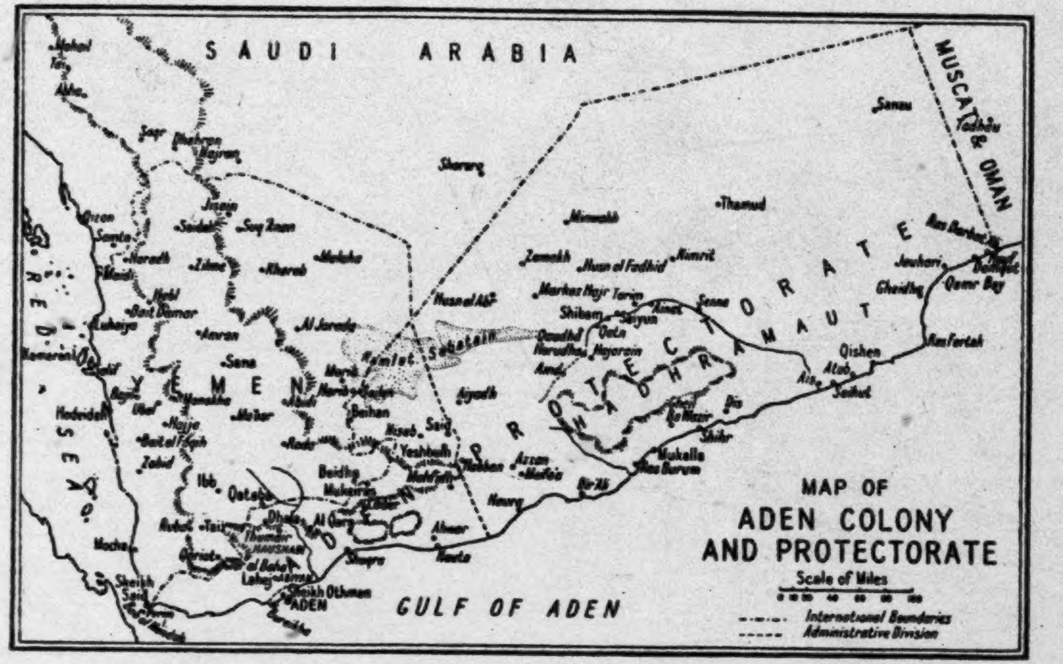
SAUDI ARABIA
MUSCAT & OMAN
YEMEN
ADEN PROTECTORATE
HADHRAMAUT
RED SEA
GULF OF ADEN
Ramlat Sabatain
Mahail
Abha
Saqr
Dhahran
Najran
Jizan
Sharara
Minwakh
Thamud
Sanau
Hadhau
Zamakh
Husn al Fadhil
Nimrit
Ras Darbat Ali
Jauhari
Damqut
Ghaidha
Qamr Bay
Ras Fartak
Markaz Hajir
Tarim
Shibam
Saiyun
Sana
Qishen
Atab
Saihut
Shihr
Mukalla
Ras Burum
Bir Ali
Hauta
Ahwar
Azzan
Nisab
Yeshbum
Beihan
Ataq
Lodar
Mukeiras
Baidha
Dhala
Ibb
Qataba
Taiz
Mocha
Sheikh Said
Lahej
Sheikh Othman
ADEN
Shuqra
Zinjibar
Hodeidah
Kamaran
Luhaiya
Zabid
Beit al Faqih
Marib
Harib
Sana
Amran
Al Jaraba
Saada
MAP OF
ADEN COLONY
AND PROTECTORATE
Scale of Miles
0 10 20 40 60 80 100
International Boundaries
Administrative Division

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1 [p. xiv]

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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

PART I

CHAPTER ONE

Entrance

AUGUST 4TH, 1951 was a clear and, for the time of year, reasonably cool day, with a light breeze quite unlike normal August weather in Aden, with leaden skies and a gusty wind which did little to relieve the heat, but rendered life more uncomfortable by blowing sand and dust about on shore and whipping the tops off the waves in the harbour. The new term would begin in a calm atmosphere climatically, and that was all that concerned me for the moment as I stood beside the Captain on the bridge of the s.s. *Glenorchy* as she moved slowly down the channel into the Inner Harbour.

Four months earlier I had been Chairman of the Aden Port Trust, an unofficial civilian responsible to the Trustees for the administration of the harbour; an appointment I had accepted at the end of 1947 after the grant of independence to India and Pakistan had brought to an abrupt and premature close my service in the Indian Political Service. Then one evening in April I returned to my house from a Housing Committee Meeting and was told that the Acting Governor wished me to ring him up as soon as possible. I telephoned the A.D.C. at Government House and was at once put through to Goode[1] who had been acting as Governor since Sir Reginald Champion had gone home on leave pending retirement. He said he had received a telegram from the Secretary of State for the Colonies which he would send down by the A.D.C. for me to see. He asked if I had any idea what it was about, and I lied to him for the only time in my association with him, telling him that

[1] Now Sir William Goode, K.C.M.G., Governor of Singapore.

I had no idea. Of course I had an idea, but not even to myself was I prepared yet to admit that the hopes which I had forced myself to put aside might, indeed, be going to come true. If I had only stopped for a moment to think I would have realised that Governors, acting or otherwise, do not send their A.D.C.s running about with telegrams after civilians; they summon them to their presence, unless, of course, something very unusual has happened. It had, and the next morning I explained to Bill Goode and he understood—he always did.

The telegram was an instruction to the Acting Governor to inquire whether I would be willing for my name to be submitted to His Majesty for appointment as Governor of the Colony and the Protectorate of Aden.

The *Glenorchy* was gay with bunting, and the ships at anchor in the harbour were dressed from stem to stern in honour of the occasion, while on shore flags flew from the public buildings and the principal business premises. There was a movement at the Prince of Wales pier as we dropped anchor opposite the Port Trust building and two launches put off from the landing steps and came towards us. In the first, flying the yellow quarantine flag, was the Port Medical Officer, and in the second, flying the Colony flag, was Bill Goode, still Acting Governor. The launches followed each other alongside our gangway and the Medical Officer came on deck, while the Acting Governor, observing protocol, remained in his launch until quarantine clearance had been given. The Captain and I left the bridge and went down to the head of the gangway ready to receive the Acting Governor. The quarantine formalities were quickly over, and down came our quarantine flag from the masthead, and up the gangway came the Acting Governor.

Goode and I went to my cabin to discuss the details of the formal arrival, which I had been informed would not take place until four o'clock in the afternoon. It had been brought home to me very quickly how true is the Arab proverb which runs, "The master of the house is the servant of the servants of the house." Mid-day was considered to be too hot to parade the troops who would mount the Guard of Honour, so His Excellency the

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Governor designate must remain hidden in the ship until the 0 0 0 atmosphere ashore was more agreeable for military exercises.

Goode and the A.D.C. and I lunched together in the deserted saloon, all the passengers who, unlike myself, were free agents, having gone ashore despite the heat. After lunch Goode and the A.D.C. returned to the shore, and left to myself, I went to my cabin and sat under a fan and chatted to my Arab servant, Salem, who was busily engaged in laying out for the first time my white ceremonial uniform with its almost indecently bright and new gold epaulettes. We talked of the town and the Protectorate and the shooting prospects for the coming winter season, and a host of other unimportant matters. We had known each other for twenty years, and between us there was a degree of understanding and mutual respect, which made our relationship closer than that of just master and servant; we were friends. One of the great charms of the Arabs of [184] tribal status from the Protectorate is that when they enter [609] service with understanding people they are never familiar and never presume. Salem and I, when on tour in the Protectorate, have on more than one occasion sat, together with the local Ruler, on the floor and eaten with our hands from the same dish, and then, twenty-four hours later, thanks to air transport, Salem, dressed in immaculate white uniform with a red fez on his head, has superintended the service of refreshments at an official function over which I have presided at Government House. Sometimes when strangers have obviously been much impressed by his correct and formal demeanour, I have had an almost irresistible desire to laugh and tell them what he and I were doing so short a time before; but I have restrained myself. It would not have done, so very few would have understood—more is the pity.

The hot afternoon passed pleasantly enough and all too soon it was time for me to put on my cool-looking, but in reality, very hot uniform and don my regulation white helmet surmounted by its plume of red and white feathers; all very glorious, but remarkably uncomfortable. As soon as I was dressed I went out on deck and found the A.D.C., a retired Commander of the Royal Navy, ready and waiting and the launch alongside.

Aden

From the deck I could see that people had gathered on the hillside overlooking the landing stage to watch the fun. Three years later they were to gather there again and to cover the entire hillside to welcome Her Majesty the Queen. On the pier itself I could see a group of Officers in white uniform and ladies in summer frocks, standing talking by the red ceremonial carpet which led up into the Memorial Hall. They were the senior Civil and Military Officials and their ladies who would be the first to greet me on arrival.

Four o'clock came, and after a brief word of appreciation to the Captain, I followed the A.D.C. down the gangway and into the waiting launch. The launch crew were old friends, servants of the Port Trust, and their friendly smiles and greetings gave me confidence as we moved quickly shorewards. I was nervous when I left the ship, and I won't deny it; I had always disliked publicity, and in particular, public speaking, and here I was really in the limelight, and, what was worse, I had to make a speech. The crew of that launch gave me confidence because they obviously had confidence in me and by the time we were alongside the pier and I had, as it were, come under the starter's orders, I had myself well in hand.

I landed and salutes were exchanged; I moved down the line of distinguished persons, shaking hands and saying a word or two to each one in turn. Then, accompanied by the Acting Judge of the Supreme Court, I moved down the red carpet and up the steps into the deep shade of the Memorial Hall which leads from the pier to the town and which houses the memorial tablets of the last two great Wars.

Inside the building I was confronted by the élite of the Colony, arranged on rows of chairs facing the entrance through which I had come. Immediately in front of me was a small table provided with two chairs and furnished with a piece of blotting-paper, an ink-stand and a copy of the Holy Bible. Everyone rose as I entered and resumed their seats as soon as I had taken mine, with the Judge on my left. The dignitaries, who had followed me in, took their places on my right and composed themselves for the next part of the ceremony.

Then the Judge rose and commenced to read the Royal

000

Commission. I noticed that he was perspiring, which was not surprising, because his black gown worn over a dark lounge suit must have made him most uncomfortable. There were no fans in that Hall and his wig must have added considerably to his distress. I noticed, too, that his hand was shaking as he held the Commission, and realised with some surprise that I was not unique in being nervous.

The reading of the Commission came to an end, and everyone stood up as I rose and took the Bible in my right hand. I repeated the words of the Oath after the Judge and then raised the Bible to my lips. The photographers were very busy and their flash-lights were quite blinding in the comparative gloom of the building as I duly signed the Oath Book. That done we all sat down, and suddenly there was a loud and startling report. The Commissioner of Police and the senior military officers were on their feet in an instant, and for a moment there was that dead silence and complete immobility which shock always produces. It was momentary, but complete. There was then a general sigh of relief throughout the Hall when it was seen that I was quite unharmed and not even alarmed. It was not a revolver shot, not an attempted assassination—nothing nearly so exciting—but just a faulty flash-light bulb which had exploded, making an unexpectedly loud noise in that confined space.

As soon as everyone who had stood up had sat down again, I commenced my address which was short and to the point and ended on the note that I was precisely the same person they had known a few months before as Chairman of the Port Trust, and even before that, when I had served in Aden in the days when it was administered from India. Whether they liked it or not, at least they knew with whom they would have to deal during the next five years. Appointment to high office had not changed me overnight.

My address completed I walked forward and shook hands with the people gathered there, before moving down the steps, escorted by the Air Officer Commanding and attended by the A.D.C., to the saluting point in front of the Guard of Honour of the Royal Air Force Regiment, which had been drawn up

000 to the east of the building. The Guard presented arms and the opening bars of "God Save the King" were played by the band of the Aden Protectorate Levies, while I stood rigidly at the salute. The inspection followed and a very sincere word of congratulation to the Guard Commander on the "turn-out" and bearing of his men. Then, another "present" and I was conscious that the ceremony was over; over without a hitch, except for the flash-lamp bulb, and that had added a little excitement to the proceedings.

The Government House car, flying the Colony flag on the bonnet, drew up, and after returning the salutes of the Air Officer Commanding and Goode who, no longer Acting Governor, was once again Chief Secretary, I drove off to Government House. As the car drove away the spectators clapped and I waved my acknowledgment. They are not a demonstrative people, the Arabs, and seldom do they forget their good manners and raise their voices to cheer. They did when the Queen came and right heartily too.

The water-front was lined by the employees of the Port Trust in their blue uniforms who had been marshalled to do honour to their late or ex-Chairman. They seemed rather listless, in fact, bored, which was not surprising as they had had to stand waiting in the sun for rather a long time, while their friends and relations enjoyed a public holiday.

At Government House the servants, from the highest to the lowest, were assembled to greet their new master. They looked happy and cheerful, and I shook hands with all of them with real pleasure. I went inside and was led to the great, gaunt, windowless bedroom which had been the private apartment of all my predecessors. It was too much. I was appalled by the place. I might have stepped into my predecessors' shoes, but I could not bring myself to sleep in their bed in that room. I rebelled and ordered my suitcases and impedimenta to be taken to the principal guest room, with which I was already well acquainted. Later, perhaps, when I had become more accustomed to my new role, I might have the courage to occupy the traditional chamber, but for the moment it was asking too much.

The new term had begun.

CHAPTER TWO

Early Days

"ARRIVED at Aden at 4 p.m. The place is not as I had 000 expected and I found I had forgotten all about it. It looked just like a penal settlement and the nearer one got the more unprepossessing the place became"; such was the entry in my diary for October 4th, 1931.

It was the normal reaction of most people who see Aden from the deck of a ship at the tail end of the summer, and, like most people, I knew very little about the town, less about the Protectorate, and nothing at all about the history of the place.

The first authentic recorded mention of Aden is to be found in the Bible at the 23rd verse of the 27th Chapter of Ezekiel, where it is written: "Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad, were thy merchants." When I read this verse I was puzzled by the rendering of Aden as "Eden", and I consulted my Arabic version of the Scriptures and was reassured by finding that the word "Eden" was spelt in precisely the same way as it is written in Arabic today. If additional evidence of the identity of this "Eden" with Aden is required, it is to be found in the very next verse which runs as follows: "These were thy merchants in all sorts of things,
in blue clothes . . ." The reference is to the indigo impregnated [291]
cloth which is still worn by very many of the inhabitants of the [386]
Protectorate and was a common sight in the Colony a few [178]
years ago.

The early history of Aden is difficult to piece together, con- 175
sisting as it does of travellers' tales and records, some undoubt- 504
edly true, but others of dubious authenticity, but the one

175 504 undeniable fact is that Aden's importance in the past, and important it was, was due as it is today to its magnificent harbour. Curiously enough the harbour was, in bygone days, on the east side of the peninsula in what are now known as Front Bay and Holkat Bay. It was not until the middle of the last century that the present harbour on the west side was surveyed and brought into use as Front Bay gradually silted up and Holkat Bay, never a safe anchorage, was abandoned.

175 434 648 The prosperity and the wealth of Aden as a trading centre has always attracted the envious attention of the rulers of the Yemen be they Himyarites or Sabeans, as they were at the beginning of the Christian era, or Abyssinians, as they were five hundred years later when the Persians in their turn invaded that country, or Turks, as they have been twice during the last thousand years, or just plain Yemenis, as they are today. I do not propose at this stage to consider past and present relations between Aden and the Yemen; they will become apparent as my story unfolds.

175 648 The Imams of the Yemen were not alone in their wish to control the destiny of Aden. The Portuguese were the first European nation who attempted to establish themselves in the town. This they did on Easter Day in 1513 when Don Alphonso d' Albuquerque, who had arrived from Goa the previous day with a fleet of twenty ships, landed over a thousand soldiers with scaling ladders to storm the fortifications. The attempt failed, and after a four-day siege, during which Don Alphonso's men succeeded only in capturing an outwork and some thirty or forty pieces of ordnance, the troops were withdrawn and after cannonading the town in a fit of temper Don Alphonso sailed away up the Red Sea.

Three years later the Mameluke Sultan of Egypt sent his Commander, Rais Suleiman, to take the town by assault, but the attempt failed. The fortifications of Aden were so damaged, however, that the Governor was prepared to surrender the place to the Portuguese when they appeared on the scene again later in the same year. They had other preoccupations at the time and refused the offer, only to find later when they again returned that the fortifications had been repaired and the

2

Governor in no mood to treat with them. The Portuguese 175 had to wait nearly fifty years before the inhabitants of Aden, 648 weary of Turkish rule, handed the town over to them. The Turks had captured Aden by treachery in 1538. They arrived in a fleet of ships and landed a number of sick men who were carried ashore and accommodated in the town. Then they invited the Governor to visit the flagship. He did so and was promptly seized and hung. At the same time the sick men in the town were miraculously restored to health, rose from their beds as able-bodied soldiers, and with little trouble the wily Turks were in control.

The Portuguese remained at Aden for a few months only, before being forced to surrender the town in 1551 to the Capidan of Egypt; in other words, the Turks were back in possession again and it was during this Turkish period of control that British ships first came on the Aden scene, when Captain Sharkey in the *Ascension*, a ship of the East India Company, paid a visit and was well received.

The Turks withdrew from Aden in the first half of the seventeenth century, and Aden was free from invasion from the sea for approximately two hundred years until, in fact, we came on the Aden scene again and Aden became what it still is today, a British possession.

By 1839 the greatness that had been Aden's had disappeared and Captain Haines of the Indian Navy, the leader of the expedition which secured the town for the British Crown and who was to become the first Resident, has left on record his first impression of the place:

> "The little village (formerly the great city) of Aden is now reduced to the most exigent condition of poverty and neglect. In the reign of Constantine this town possessed unrivalled celebrity for its impenetrable fortifications, its flourishing commerce, and the glorious haven it afforded to vessels from all quarters of the globe. How lamentable is the present contrast." [1]

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[1] Hunter's *Statistical Account of the British Settlement of Aden*, 1877, p. 169.

Aden

175

[312] That Aden still possessed some fine buildings even as late as 1710 we know from the record left by a French traveller who, after referring to the "handsome" aqueduct which had been built originally in 1500 to bring water into the town from Sheikh Othman ten miles away, and deploring the state of the fortifications, referred to the town in the following terms:

[342] [349] [368] [532] "The city is still considerably large and one may still see several handsome houses two storeys high with flat roofs, but there is also an abundance of rubbish and ruins. It must be owned that there is nothing finer of its kind than the baths there. They are lined with marble or jasper and covered with a handsome dome, having a hole at the top to let in light, and adorned on the inside with galleries supported by magnificent pillars."[1]

178 368 346 There was no sign of this delightful place when I arrived, nor were there any public baths, swimming or otherwise, until twenty-four years later when I opened the handsome Municipal Swimming Bath in Holkat Bay, but by 1931 Aden was by no means in an "exigent condition of poverty and neglect". Far from it; it was a flourishing town, though all that remained of the ancient splendour was the tall white minaret in Crater overlooking what is now the Football Stadium. A lonely ghost from the past whose mosque has long since disappeared.

000 My disagreeable first impression remains with many travellers for the rest of their lives and the mere mention of the name Aden is sufficient to conjure up in their imaginations an exaggerated recollection of heat, haze and noise and, above all, a barrenness beyond belief.

312 In the early nineteen-thirties fresh water from wells in the village of Sheikh Othman had only recently been brought in to the main town and the population were still dependent mainly on condensed water for drinking purposes, and there was virtually no water at all for gardens or any other form of
000 cultivation. Only a few like myself succeeded in penetrating the haze and forgetting the lack of vegetation and the discomfort of prickly heat, as we became more and more absorbed with the people and their problems and travelled beyond the

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[1] Dr. J. C. Young, *Ancient History of Aden*, 1923.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

narrow confines of the rocky headland on which Aden lies into 000
the interior of the Protectorate; a land of hills and deserts and of wild and warlike people as lovable as they are childlike and wayward. I have met many people who have passed through Aden and they have all disliked it, while at the same time I have met almost as many people who have lived there and they have all spoken with affection of the place. Arabia is a hard mistress who conquers slowly but, having conquered, never, never relaxes her hold, nor does the victim wish for release.

The Colony of Aden, as it is known today, it was called the 131
Settlement when I first went there as a Government servant, 133
is quite a small area only 75 square miles in extent. In appearance 361
it resembles a lobster's claw, a maimed lobster, with one half of the claw shorter than the other. The claw is open and
between the two halves lies the harbour. On one side of the [504]
harbour is the peninsula of Aden proper, and on the other the peninsula of Little Aden, now re-named Bureikha—just two promontories jutting out into the Gulf of Aden. The one on which the town of Aden stands is connected to the mainland by a narrow isthmus, the other is almost part of the mainland. Both these promontories are hilly and are connected to each other by a narrow strip of plain running round the northern side of the harbour from Little Aden, widening considerably to include the town of Sheikh Othman and the village of Imad and eventually reaching the sea again at the Khormaksar beach some eight miles to the east of Aden town. The boundary of the Colony has been demarcated and has not been in dispute for many years. The island of Perim, which lies at the bottom end of the Red Sea, is part of the Colony, why, precisely, I have never been able to understand. Perim was at one time a relatively important coaling station, with a garrison of Indian Army troops, but now that coal has been superseded by oil it is deserted, except for the personnel of the two important lighthouses, a few fishermen, and a detachment of Armed Police from the Colony Police Force.

The main commercial centre of the Colony lies in the midst 566
of the old volcano and is appropriately called "Crater". The [133]
trading and maritime suburbs of Tawahi (Steamer Point to 361
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133 passengers from ships) and Ma'alla are built on the northern and western slopes of Jebel Shamsan, the highest peak of the volcanic range of hills surrounding Crater. Jebel Shamsan is quite a presentable hill, for it is just over 1,700 ft. in height and was at one time adorned with a signal station.

361 The isthmus which joins Aden to the mainland is called
133 Khormaksar and is as flat as the proverbial pancake. During
132 the monsoon winds of summer it is a hellish place of drifting
508 sand and it is here that the Royal Air Force have their station;
707 the military and civil airport are also here. Close by the airport
are the houses of the more senior civil and military officials
361 and a few ordinary folk, who are, on the whole, much better
647 paid than the officials, but of course not nearly so important.
648 Originally there were only two rows of houses, one of brown houses and the other of white houses, and since they were inhabited mainly by officials, they were, not unnaturally, known as Downing Street and Whitehall. Now there are rows and rows of houses, all variations of the usual colonial box theme in architecture, incredibly ugly but reasonably comfortable, but I am glad to say Whitehall and Downing Street are still the really fashionable roads.

361 At the northern and landward end of the isthmus there is the
351 town of Sheikh Othman with its pleasant gardens so well known to many tourists. Sheikh Othman was also, until quite recently, well known in a less desirable way to visitors and residents alike, but in modern times morals seem to have improved, and while the gardens have been enlarged, the other
361 attractions have been reduced. The town was not acquired by
648 any splendid feat of arms, but by a purely commercial trans-
175 action. It was bought from the Sultan of Lahej in 1882. Aden, on the other hand, was invested in 1839 by an armed expedition from India, carried in ships of the Indian Navy. The reason for this expedition is said to have been to punish an outrage which had occurred when the crew of an English ship wrecked on the coast near Aden were maltreated. In point of fact the probabilities are that the reason for our somewhat drastic action was because we wished to control the only good harbour between India and Egypt and use it as a coaling station

for our ships. As negotiations with the Lahej Sultan, who then 361
owned the Aden Peninsula, had broken down, the deadlock 648
was solved by force. The original owner of Little Aden was 175
the Akrabi Sheikh, a quite unimportant person whose minute 175
territory is surrounded on three sides by his infinitely larger and 648
more powerful neighbour Lahej. Whether or not the Akrabi 643
Sheikh was entitled to sell is a matter which has occupied the minds of the Sultans of Lahej from time to time even up to the present day, but sell the Sheikh did in 1888 and buy we did, and that for all practical purposes is that.

Aden has been safe from foreign aggressors since we our- 175
selves filled that role in 1839; except for a brief period during 648
the First World War when a part of what is now the Colony 926
was occupied by Turkish forces. This rather curious state of 721
affairs came about in this way: Lahej, the name usually given to the capital of the Sultanate of the same name, the premier of all the Protectorate States by virtue of the importance of that State combined with the fact that the Lahej Treaty was the first to be concluded in the year 1839, is only some 17 miles to the north of Sheikh Othman. In 1915 the Turkish wolf came down on the Aden fold by way of the donkey-cum-camel tracks from Taiz in the Yemen. The then Sultan of Lahej, a good friend of ours, marched against the common foe with what tribesmen he could rally to his banner and at the same time he very properly called on the General Officer Commanding the Aden Garrison for assistance. In Aden there was, of course, tremendous excitement as a column was hastily organised and assembled at Sheikh Othman. It was the most ill-fated column that ever set out; there were incredible delays at the start, with the result that the troops did not begin their advance until the sun was well up. It was the height of summer and the 17 miles across which they had to move on foot were sandy and devoid of practically all forms of cover. The water for the column was carried on camels; the camels ran away shortly after the start. Whether this was of their own volition or whether they were encouraged to do so by treacherous drivers is a matter of opinion, for no records of that disastrous march are known to exist. The troops continued their advance and they went on

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648 over the hot sand, some of them to their death from heat
726 exhaustion and thirst, but most of them did, in fact, arrive at
721 the thin palm groves of the Lahej Oasis. Many more would have failed and died but for the European merchants of Aden, who, obtaining ice from the ice factories in the town, sent it out in Ford cars after the column. The cars stuck in the sand, but mercifully not all in the same place, so that many of those who failed to complete the march and turned back found ice to sustain them at intervals across the desert until once again they were able to reach Sheikh Othman. As I have said, the majority of the column did reach Lahej and with it was an officer of my acquaintance who was one of the only two members of the Garrison who had ever been there before this disastrous military adventure. One day, twenty years later, as he and I drove together to Lahej to a lunch party being given by the Sultan, he pointed to a small clump of thorn bushes under which, on that memorable day, he had crawled to escape from the heat of the sun, utterly exhausted. He told me that when he had partially recovered he thought to himself: "If I stay here I shall certainly be shot as a deserter. If I try and go on I may die, but on the other hand I may get there." So choosing the uncertainty in preference to the certainty he did go on and he reached Lahej.

Those of the column who did get through were hastily reorganised and were disposed to meet the advancing Turks. By one of those odd changes of climate which occur in the tropics it poured with rain that night and it was indeed a miserable remnant of the column that saw the sunrise the next day. At daylight the troops moved forward through the northern limits of the Oasis and out on to the plain that leads up to the foothills to make contact with the Sultan's force, which they knew to be engaged with the enemy. The Sultan himself came riding back to meet these British reinforcements and to inform them of the enemy's dispositions and of those of his own soldiers. He met them. It was the last thing he ever did. They shot him dead. They thought he was a Turk, and then, without coming to grips with the Turkish forces at all, they turned back whence they had come, back all the way to

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

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Aden. The Turks occupied Lahej as they had already occupied 648
the territories of the Haushabi Sultan and the Amir of Dhala, 726
two Protectorate rulers whom the British Government had 721
undertaken to defend. They advanced to Sheikh Othman and they occupied the whole of the northern side of the harbour, even the Little Aden headland.

I have never understood why the combatants never fired at each other across the harbour. Maybe the Turks had no guns, or if they had, they were not powerful enough, or perhaps the guns of the fortress could not be trained away from the sea like those of an even greater fortress in a later and greater war. Whatever the reason, the fact remains that neither side seems to have made any effort to interfere with the other.

When I first knew the Residency, as Government House 000
used to be called, there was mounted on the northern verandah overlooking the sea an enormous brass telescope beneath which a wooden table stood on which had been cut bearing lines on to the Turkish position on the north side of the harbour. The General Officer Commanding, who, at that time, was also the Resident, could thus with the least inconvenience to himself examine the enemy's position when he had finished his breakfast and before he applied his mind to greater things. The telescope still remains at Government House, though unfortunately the range table has disappeared.

The Turks remained in Sheikh Othman until eventually the 175
General, another General this time, bestirred himself and 648
marched against them; then they retreated to Lahej and they remained there until 1918 when Turkey was out of the war, and then they surrendered. Rude people say that the military authorities were induced finally to take belligerent action by the Committee of the Khormaksar Golf Club. The Golf Club's course, unfortunately, lay between the Turks and the British, and this was highly inconvenient to the members, so their representatives are said to have waited upon the General and pointed out that in the circumstances then prevailing golf was more exciting than comfortable. This tale may well be false and is certainly exaggerated, but there is no doubt whatsoever that there was a certain lack of initiative in the conduct of the

648 military authorities throughout this episode in the history of the Colony.

643 In my early days in Aden, government was comparatively simple. The Resident, who was the senior civil official and *ex-officio* Commander-in-Chief, drove down to his office in Tawahi every morning from the Residency to deal with routine affairs and see anyone who cared to call on him. All were welcome, from the more senior departmental officers to the humblest of the humble of the subjects of His Majesty. Sir Bernard Reilly, who then held that position, had an amazing capacity for work and for play, and he succeeded in remaining outwardly completely unruffled even when dealing with important operations in the Protectorate which involved that much discussed topic, bombing, or when provoked by the Governments of both India and Bombay who invariably treated Aden as if it was a small town in the Bombay Presidency. Such was his conduct in public, but in private I have known him to express his views both freely and frankly.

645 In addition to the Resident there were four of us in the Secretariat, Gordon[1] of the Indian Political Service, who was the First Assistant Resident, Champion[2] of the Colonial Service, who was the Political Secretary, Lake,[3] the one and only Political Officer, and myself. I acted as Second Assistant Resident, in addition to my other duties at the Residency itself where I was a glorified A.D.C. Champion and Lake ran the Protectorate between them with the help of the head interpreter, Khan Bahadur Muhammed Salim Ali, an elderly gentleman with a Mongolian caste of countenance, who sat in a particularly small room under the stairs surrounded by papers, smoking a very bubbly water pipe, with his turban-like headdress on the back of his head or resting among the files, depending upon the heat of the room and his own degree of irritation. He had a remarkably hoarse voice and wore a pair of spectacles on the end of his nose, over which he peered at the crowd of Sheikhs, tribesmen and hangers-on, all wanting something and

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[1] Now Lt.-Colonel J. de la H. Gordon, C.S.I., C.I.E., O.B.E., M.C.

[2] Now Sir Reginald Champion, K.C.M.G., O.B.E.

[3] Lt.-Colonel M. C. Lake, C.M.G. (dec.).

all talking at once, who squatted in what little space there was 645 inside the room and overflowed into the passage outside. The work these three men did was incredibly difficult and yet they were successful to a remarkable degree, and succeeded in maintaining not only security on the trade routes in the Protectorate, but at the same time they were able to strengthen the ties between Government and the Rulers.

Outside the Secretariat there were only three European officers of the Government. The senior was the Chairman of the Port Trust Board and of the Settlement Board, and at the time of which I am writing the appointment was held by an officer of the Royal Engineers who had been seconded to the civil engineering side of the Government of India. He presided over the Board of Trustees of the Port and was also the Chief Executive Officer, and in addition he managed the affairs of the Settlement. The Settlement, as I have already indicated, was a term which included all the British territory which is now the Colony, and the Settlement Board was the successor of what in fact had been a Municipal Committee. A munici- 632 pality was formed some while after our occupation of Aden in 1839, but it was not until 1882 that any attempt seems to have been made to produce a set of municipal rules. In 1900 the local authority ceased to be called a Municipal Committee and became known as the Aden Settlement. As such it, in fact, did everything, and rather more, that an ordinary municipality does in this country. The "rather more" being control of the [648] electric light supply and also the water supply, both profitable undertakings which were wrested from it when in 1937 Aden became a Crown Colony and the new Colonial Government was in search of funds.

The next important European officer was the Judicial Assist- 692 ant, who succeeded in combining with a reasonable degree of success the duties of legal adviser to the Resident and Judge of the District and Sessions Court. The last, but by no means 625 least important of the European officers, was the Commissioner of Police who was seconded from the Indian Police and under the District Magistrate was responsible for the maintenance of law and order.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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KHAN BAHADUR SIR MUHAMMED MACKAWEE, K.B.E.

[facing p. 18]

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Aden

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The most outstanding personality that Aden has ever produced was the late Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammed Abdul Qadar Mackawwi, K.B.E. I came to know him intimately in course of time and to benefit greatly, not only in my early days in Aden, but later when I was Governor, from his wise advice. He was a fine man and a credit to any country, and it was Aden's misfortune that ill health should overtake him just when his wise counsel was most needed. He died in 1953.

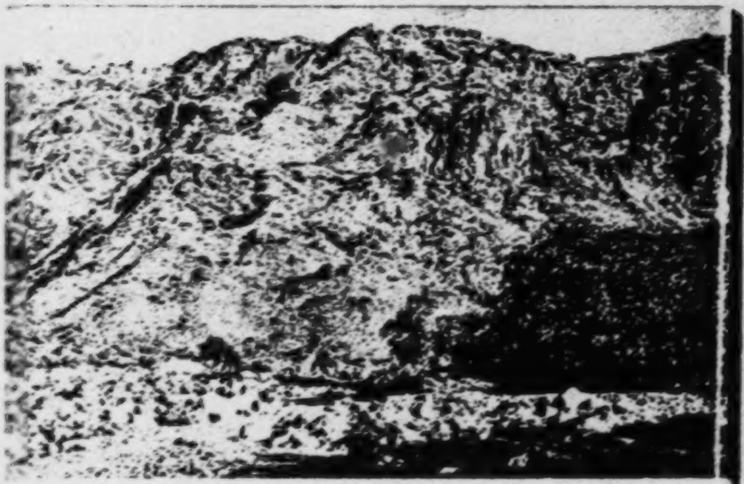
The first time that I came in contact with him occurred in this way: One morning I was in my office in the Secretariat and the Resident rang his bell, and as I entered his office he said:

"Here are the nominations to the Port Trust Board which I have discussed with the Chairman. They must go to Bombay for the Governor's approval as soon as possible," and he handed me a file.

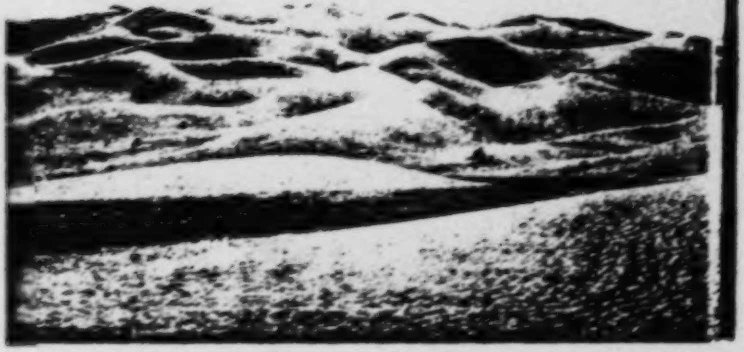
"Have you made any alterations, Sir?" I inquired.

"No. The Chairman wants me to drop Mackawwi, he thinks he is on too many committees and that he should have a rest. At least that is what he says, but in fact he finds him an infernal nuisance. No. I am not going to drop Mackawwi; if I did there would be no-one to keep the Chairman up to his work," was the answer I got.

It was later the same morning that Mackawwi came to see me. Tall and almost incredibly thin, with ears even more prominent than my own, he wore a small grey moustache and a tuft of white hair which would have been an imperial if it had only been rather higher up on his chin. He had that quiet dignity of manner which is a characteristic of all well-bred Arabs. He was dressed, as was his normal custom, in a long white cotton gown which reached to his feet, over which he wore a coat of the same material and colour and a waistcoat adorned with a gold watch-chain. His head-dress in winter was an embroidered red woollen turban, and in summer a lighter one of silk surrounding a small, white, knitted cotton cap. On ceremonial occasions and sometimes when it was really cold in the winter, he wore a black overcoat which he had bought in London on the only occasion that he had visited the United Kingdom. Though invariably polite, even when



THE AUDHALI ESCARPMENT



SAND DUNES OF THE RUBA-AL-KHALI IN THE NORTHERN REACHES OF THE PROTECTORATE

[facing p.19]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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annoyed, he was rather a trying visitor because he never spoke above a whisper and was in consequence at the best of times very difficult to hear; in Committees it was often quite impossible to follow what he was saying unless one was seated next to him. His family, as the name implies, came originally from Mecca, but he himself was of mixed blood; one of his grandmothers was a Somali and his mother was of Egyptian descent. His father had been the Settlement engineer, a man of unusual talents who had written two small books, one on Chemistry and the other on Muslim Law; and being a man of remarkable integrity had died with no fortune to leave to his sons. Mackawwi was largely self-educated and started to earn his living as a petition writer and a teacher of Arabic to the Officers of the garrison. Ambitious and restless he turned to trade and began to deal in hides, skins and coffee on borrowed capital. He was fortunate and industrious, and as his business expanded he travelled in the Red Sea area, visiting the Yemen ports, Abyssinia and the Sudan.

In the Sudan he met General Sir Reginald Wingate and Lady Wingate whose brother, General Sir Leslie Rundle, had been a pupil of his as a young officer. Sir Leslie and his sister were the children of Mr. Rundle, the Royal Naval Mate who first planted the Red Ensign on the soil of Aden in 1839 at Sirah Island in Crater. He was promoted to Lieutenant for his courage and leadership on that occasion, and his flag has been framed and now hangs in Government House.

Realising the need in Aden for a good contractor, Mackawwi added building to his other activities. He was so successful in this new venture that by the time I came to know him his trading activities had ceased completely and he devoted his working hours to contracting. His leisure, if it can be so described, was spent in public work and charitable enterprises.

On this our first meeting he came to the point immediately. "I want to talk to you about the Port Trust Board and the Settlement Committee. There should be more Arabs on them; this is essentially an Arab country and I alone represent my people on the Port Trust," he said, "and on the Settlement Committee there are only two of us."

"I agree with you, Khan Bahadur, and I am sure the Resident shares your views, but whom can you suggest? Who among the Arabs has the necessary education, knowledge of English and time to spare to serve on either of the Boards? If you will only let me know I shall speak to the Resident most willingly," was my reply.

"Why ask when you know the answer, there is no-one, no-one who is sufficiently well educated and what is worse, no-one who is sufficiently public spirited. The older merchants think of nothing but money and care little for their country, all they want is to be left in peace to trade. The younger men are inexperienced and in fact are not properly educated. It is a very serious state of affairs, and I am worried, very worried."

"What are you worried about?" I asked.

"Provincial autonomy in India and its effect on Aden. Have you thought what will happen when India gets self-government, as I am sure she will? You Englishmen and we Arabs understand each other reasonably well, but we will never submit to Indian domination. Arabia is asleep and has been for hundreds of years, but the awakening is near and that is really why I am afraid. I am afraid of what will happen to the Arabs if they wake up too suddenly, because to be startled from sleep is dangerous and men can do strange things between sleeping and waking. I am afraid that we Arabs may not know our enemies from our friends and do ourselves much harm by acting too hastily."

He was very serious, and for a time he sat motionless, gazing out of my window across the harbour to the faint outline of the mountains in the distance and then he came back to the subject of India.

"What has India done for us? Nothing. We are backward, very backward and the fault is entirely with India. Education is essential, is essential to all people and to us more than most, for we have none. Where is it? You have seen the schools, you have seen the Indians who teach. Where are the Arab teachers? Oh, I know that you will answer that we must be patient and that we have none in Aden, but they can be brought from other Arab countries, and until we have competent Arabic-

speaking teachers of our own language we shall make no 000
progress. One of my sons, who is in Edinburgh, has just failed an examination and of all things he has failed in Arabic. It is a disgrace and for that disgrace we have India to thank. We are not part of that country geographically and we are not the same people and we do not speak the same language."

He paused again, and then with an abrupt change of subject went on:

"We have no newspapers, but unfortunately we have got [204]
lawyers. Newspapers, properly managed, can be useful and let the Government know how the people think and make the people think in the right way, but they can be dangerous unless they are in the hands of experienced and honest men, and we have none. Where is the experience to come from? Maybe [693]
it is as well that we have no newspapers, but the lawyers, well, that was a serious mistake, they should never have been allowed to practise until the people were better educated; they are a plague, they are worse than locusts, they make mischief and they encourage people to go to courts. At the present time they are too busy making money to think of other things, but they will once they have grown fat and then they will talk politics to the people and this before the people are properly awake. It will be dangerous and Government must take the necessary measures."

He had an irritating habit, as I was to realise later, of saying that Government must take "the necessary measures" and not saying what form the "measures" should take. So often in the future was he to diagnose the distemper, but unfortunately not very often was he able to suggest the remedy. His reference 693
to the lawyers was to be repeated from time to time through the years that I knew him. They had been allowed to practise in the courts in Aden in 1928; before that they were prohibited from appearing in court, although there had been no prohibition on their acting as legal advisers out of court. At that time [563]
the Bar was approximately one hundred per cent. Indian and was to remain so for nearly twenty years, and it is probably this monopoly of the Bar by Indians which accounted to some extent for Mackawwi's dislike of lawyers, but it was not the

693 whole reason, because there was a great deal in what he had said. In the early days certainly, there was a tendency for some of the less scrupulous legal practitioners not to attempt too seriously to dissuade their clients from going to court when they had no case.

000 Mackawwi now turned to the Protectorate, and said:

"You have not seen the Protectorate yet?"

"No," I replied.

"They are ignorant and poor people and something should be done for them," he said.

"What should be done?" I inquired. It was a question I was often to ask him and sometimes he did give me an answer, but more often than not the reply came,

"I do not know, but something should be done, something should be done before it is too late."

At this point the bell rang from the Resident's room and Mackawwi, unfolding his legs—he had been sitting with one thrown over the other—rose to his feet and with a particularly charming smile shook hands, and drifted through the door and away as if carried by the light breeze that blew that morning from the sea.

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668 From the time that Aden was first acquired by us it formed part of the Bombay Presidency, but by 1932 political developments in India had reached a stage which made a break with Bombay inevitable. The Resident had been consulted, and it had been made clear to the authorities in India and London that the Arabs, who formed the majority of the population of the Settlement, would react most unfavourably to any suggestion that Aden should continue to be under the jurisdiction of the Bombay Government once provincial autonomy had become a fact in India. We took the view in Aden at that time that it would not be practicable for Aden to continue under control which had passed into the hands of the Indians themselves. Aden was not an Indian Colony, and over the years the Arabs had learnt one thing very clearly and that was not to expect generous treatment from India.

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668 To understand the attitude of the Arabs to other races it must be realised that they consider themselves and always have, as

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as superior to all people of colour and as equal in every way 563
with ourselves and the Americans. The other European races 668
fall, in their view, into a category somewhere between the Eastern and African races and the British, and it was therefore unthinkable that once the Aden Arabs had understood the implications of our policy in India that they would submit tamely to Indian domination. As Mackawwi said, they had been asleep for years, but now were beginning to stir and show signs of awakening.

In the spring of 1932, as Second Assistant Resident, I signed 642
the Government Notice informing the public that Aden had 648
been created a Chief Commissioner's Province under the direct control of the Government of India and was therefore no longer subordinate to the Government of Bombay. The issue of this very important Notice, which was in fact the first step on the road to internal self-government (though no-one recognised it as such at that time) caused little comment in Aden, except among the Parsees who viewed the transfer with disfavour. They had friends and relatives in Bombay and hoped that with the coming of Provincial autonomy to that Province they would have been able to play an even greater part in Aden affairs in the future than they had done in the past.

The practical effect of the change was that instead of the 648
Bombay Government making kind noises when some proposal for the improvement of the lot of the people of Aden was submitted to them and passing it on to the Government of India, with the strongest recommendations and a clear indication that they could not make the necessary finance available, the Government of India just said "No" at once. The result was precisely the same although indeed speedier and had the advantage that no false hopes were encouraged in the inexperienced.

The continued lack of sympathy on the part of the Government 648
of India during the years following the transfer from 668
Bombay could have but one result and that was to make the Arabs resent more and more the link between Aden and India. It had become a fetter to be shaken off as soon as possible. Mackawwi, and those who thought as he did, began to take

648 more interest in political matters and their numbers began to
668 increase rapidly. The advent of Provincial autonomy in India only added fuel to the fire of discontent and the thought that one day the Central Government in Delhi might follow, almost certainly would follow, the example of the Bombay and other Provincial Governments and that British officials in Aden might be replaced by Indians was intolerable. The Arabs became seriously alarmed and even the Hadhrami merchants paused in the counting of their profits to survey the scene. They did not like what they saw and they joined forces with Mackawwi and his friends who led a deputation to the Resident. The deputation asked that the Settlement of Aden should be treated in the same way as the Protectorate, which had been transferred to the control of the Colonial Office in London in 1928, and that in future they should come under the direct authority of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. They did not wait upon the Resident in any servile spirit, they came as the leaders of the people, and they came armed with their conditions. Aden was to remain a free port, no new taxation was to be imposed unless local circumstances made it essential and the judicial appeals were to continue to the High Court of Bombay.

The views of the Arabs were transmitted to London and New Delhi. Meanwhile the Arabs held meetings and the Parsees led the opposition and in turn held meetings. The meetings organised by the Parsees were well attended by the Arabs attracted, so uncharitable people said, by the refreshment that was provided by these well-to-do gentlemen.

As is customary when something is referred to London, nothing very much happened for some time, and the Arabs made the next move which took the form of a written memorandum embodying their views and their requests and the guarantees for which they had asked. This in turn was sent to London and New Delhi, and in consequence further negotiations followed which, from the Arab point of view, were
642 successful. Their request was granted and their conditions were
648 accepted and, in 1937, on April 1st, the Settlement of Aden became a Crown Colony under the direct control of the

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Colonial Office in London. Another fetter had been thrown 648
aside.

I must say a word here about that part of the guarantee 439
which ensured that Aden should remain a free port, for it is of the greatest importance. Aden was at that time, and I am glad to say still is, the great distributing centre for imports from the West and the East round the shores of Arabia and down the African coast. Cigarettes, piece-goods, provisions, machinery, sugar and grain all come to Aden in ocean-going vessels from all over the world and find their way by coastal steamers and country craft up and down the Red Sea and round the neighbouring coast. These steam coasters and country craft on their return voyages bring gums, hides and skins and coffee to Aden to be cleaned, sorted and graded, bagged or baled and exported to Europe and the United States of America. Aden has main- 504
tained her position as a great *entrepôt* by virtue of four factors and they are, her geographical position, her natural harbour, her security and her freedom from import and export duties. Only an act of God could alter the configuration of Arabia or fill the harbour by some tempestuous upheaval beyond the control of man, and security will remain and be maintained as long as Great Britain remains great. The only doubtful 651
factor at any time was freedom from customs duty, and the Arab leaders and their advisers in 1937 knew how essential it was to secure, in so far as they possibly could, this freedom as a preliminary to the transfer. None of us in Aden knew what the precise income of the new Colony would be and none of us knew what it was going to cost to run a Colony efficiently, especially a Colony which had been neglected for so long. What we did know was that the imposition of import or export duties, which might seem to be an obvious source of revenue, would in fact have a disastrous effect on the trade of the Colony. At the same time we were well aware that even British Government Departments have been known to be very short-sighted when pressed by the Treasury to find money to meet a deficit. Everyone expected that there would be a deficit if Aden was to have even half what she needed so badly—hence the insistence of the Arabs led by Mackawwi on this guarantee.

CHAPTER THREE

The Port Trust and the Legislative Council

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IN 1948 I was appointed Chairman of the Aden Port Trust by the Governor-in-Council.

When I took over my new duties the port was handling some 220 ocean-going ships of over 200 tons a month and was badly under-staffed. There were only six pilots and the Chief Engineer's Department was working night and day to maintain the floating craft. Oil was rapidly replacing coal as ships' bunkers, and 80 per cent of the ships using Aden harbour were calling primarily for fuel oil. Some years ago two men reached a bunkering agreement which was to be the foundation of Aden's prosperity. One was Lord Cadman of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, now B.P. Ltd., and the other Lord Inchcape, Chairman of the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. The former said, in effect, if you put your ships in at Aden I will see that they are fuelled, and the latter agreed. Thus, almost overnight, Aden became a major oil re-fuelling port, whereas before she had depended principally on her coal-bunkering facilities to attract shipping.

Port dues and other charges had been kept as low as economic considerations would allow; the level of taxation in the Colony was reasonable and trade was brisk on a sellers' market as the shortages caused by the World War began to be made good and more and more commodities, unseen for years, came back on to the market. Shipping at Aden had reached the pre-war level and had continued to increase monthly as more and more vessels were released from their wartime occupations and came back to their peacetime trade, and the shipyards in the United Kingdom and elsewhere turned their thoughts and hands to the production once again of merchant ships.

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It is interesting to note that immediately before the Suez crisis in 1956 over 5,000 ships a year, representing more than twenty-two million net registered tons of shipping were calling at Aden. They took some four million tons of oil away from the harbour in their bunkers, much of which was supplied by the Aden Refinery which was completed in 1953.

The consequence of all this was a considerable expansion of business, not only in the port, but also in the Colony as a whole, and more and more people flocked in from the mainland and from overseas to supply the labour required by merchants and by building contractors who were beginning to make good the time that had been wasted during the war years, when building in any form other than for purely military purposes had been impossible. The consequences, or one of them, of this influx of people was to make the housing shortage acute and was to cause me, as a Legislative Councillor, many weary evenings on Committees. At the same time our shortage of staff and floating craft was a major preoccupation during my mornings and evenings in the Port Trust building. Skilled men were almost impossible to find, and high wages were not the solution to the problem, because everybody had been abroad during the war and now that it was over everyone wanted to stay at home; added to which there was the six-year gap represented by the war years in the production of skilled men, in particular in the engineering profession. It was a difficult time, but we overcame the major obstacles and the port was never forced to close even for an hour. Sickness reduced our ranks temporarily and tugs broke down and launches ran into each other, but the work went on, thanks to the supreme loyalty of the Port Trust employees.

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Eventually more pilots were recruited and half-fledged engineers found and pilot launches and a new tug ordered, but as soon as the men could be found and the craft launched so the demand increased, and in 1951 when I left the Port Trust my task was still far from complete. All our time, however, was

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504 not spent in the struggle for staff and the effort to keep abreast
505 of the shipping expansion. We found time to decasualise our
labour and to revise and improve our terms of service until
now they bear little resemblance to what they were ten years
[745] ago. A families' medical service was introduced, which was a
sort of modified National Insurance Scheme confined to the
families of our employees, and this was but one of the many
improvements which the wisdom of the Trustees enabled us
to make.

504 The future of the Port was never far from the minds of the Trustees, nor was the need to keep pace with the Suez Canal development and our rival across the Gulf of Aden, Djibouti, the capital of the French Somali Coast. Development plans were made by our consulting engineers in London and they included the deepening of some of the berths to thirty-nine feet. The deepest berths we had in 1948 were thirty-six feet. Land reclamation schemes to utilise the spoil from the necessary dredging were conceived and were approved. We had a busy time, for with all these preoccupations we had to plan and build accommodation for our own rapidly expanding staff. This was an immediate and urgent necessity and it was done.

The port development, dredging and land reclamation schemes, which started on paper in the late forties, have now either been completed by my successor, or are in the last stages of implementation. They do not contain any provision for deep-water alongside berths, although I, like practically all my predecessors, gave much consideration to this proposition and even went so far as to have a scheme prepared by our Consulting Engineers. However, after consultation with the Directors of the leading steamship Companies I abandoned the idea and decided instead to deepen the channel to Ma'alla Wharf to eighteen feet, and to extend that wharf so that large coasting vessels could come alongside there and load and discharge. The cost of alongside berths for the large passenger and cargo ships would be tremendous and unjustified unless and until Aden becomes a major terminal port with thousands and thousands of tons of cargo to be handled weekly.

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The Board of Trustees who manage the Port are nominated by the Governor and they represent financial, shipping, oiling and trading interests in the Colony and the prosperity of their own interests depends on the continued prosperity of the Port, just as the prosperity of the Colony depends on that of the Port. Government is represented on the Board by the Financial Secretary, the Royal Navy by the Resident Naval Officer, and the Air Officer Commanding has his own representative, so that the Chairman has a body of able men personally interested in the well-being of the port who have among their number experts in finance, business, shipping and naval and military affairs. Trading and shipping interests may on occasion clash, so normally their representatives are approximately equal in numbers and no particular interest is allowed to predominate. The system works very well, and I see no reason why it should not continue to do so, but some people may consider that the time has nearly come when the practice for all the Trustees to be the Governor's nominees should be modified. This is a matter of opinion, and there are certainly some people who would like to see the Chamber of Commerce and the Aden Shipping Federation directly represented. Labour, as such, is not represented on the Board and until their leaders have more experience and are more mature it would be unwise to experiment in this direction.

The Trustees meet at least once a fortnight, and are required to do so by the Act which gives them authority, and to encourage them not to neglect this duty they receive a fee for each attendance. The Act also lays down that the fee is payable only to such of the Trustees as are present from the beginning to the end of the meeting. It is not often that such common-sense is met with in official Acts.

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In my time the Trustees always forgathered before the meeting on the verandah of the Port Trust building, summer and winter alike. They refused to have anything to do with waiting in the comfortable and reasonably cool Board Room. They did not say anything; they just remained outside on the verandah and a few minutes before the time for the meeting it was customary for the Chairman to join them there.

Aden

You can picture the scene as I walk out on to the verandah a moment or two before 9.30 a.m., the normal time of the bi-weekly meetings. Most of the Trustees are in the open part of the verandah, smoking and chatting in the sun, except for Mackawwi who, like most Arabs, dislikes the sun, and is in a shady corner talking to the Naval representative, who is probably thinking about horses—he spends all his spare time in the saddle. I count the heads and find two missing, Oil and one of the shipping representatives. It seems that Oil, who is a kindly soul much given to good works, has hurried into one of the offices to telephone Shipping who he fears has forgotten, will arrive late and lose his fee. We wait for a few minutes and then the absentee arrives full of apologies and wearing a bow tie. He represents one of the senior shipping companies, has been a Trustee for years, and has done a great deal of good work though he seldom speaks. I gather my flock and lead the way into the Board Room, where we all take our seats and I nod to the Financial Secretary to the Government who sits opposite me. He and I cross swords from time to time both here and in the Standing Finance Committee of the Legislative Council, where we also sit opposite to each other. Our battles here are light-hearted as, in fact, we work in close accord with Government. It would be absurd and intolerable if we did not, because our interests are so closely inter-connected.

Pipes are being filled and greetings being exchanged, and no-one would believe that the Trustees had, in fact, been doing the same thing outside for the last ten minutes.

The first item on the Agenda is to confirm the Minutes of the previous meeting, and I open the Minute Book and ask if the Minutes of the last meeting, which have been circulated, can be confirmed. No-one pays the least attention, except the Trustee next to me who holds up his hand; he is probably the only one who has heard what I said, so I assume that no-one objects and sign the enormous Minute Book which reposes in the middle of the table. Mackawwi is smoking a cigarette with an expression of faint distaste, as if he was not quite sure whether he liked it or not. He never carries cigarettes himself and, curiously enough, accepts them only from people whom he likes; the

Navy sits next to him and acts as unofficial tobacco supply ship.

By the time I call the next item on the Agenda everyone has settled down and the business is dealt with with commendable despatch, so much so that normally we have completed the Agenda by half-past ten or eleven o'clock, and disperse to meet again in a fortnight's time.

In accordance with a custom which I have maintained throughout my official life, my Office was open to all, and strict orders had been given that I was to be informed directly anyone asked to see me. All sorts of people came, from senior Government officials and business men to the more humble of our employees with financial and sometimes family difficulties.

But the most curious visitor I ever had was a wandering Dervish from the Yemen. He came with a curious tale of having been asked by some people he believed to be Port Trust employees, to cast a spell on me so that I would become ill and have to leave Aden. He said that he thought they came from Ma'alla Wharf where at the time I was conducting an anti-graft campaign with considerable success. The people who came to see him had threatened, so he alleged, to throw acid in my face if he refused their request. I asked him whether he had agreed to put a spell upon me, and he said he had refused to do so and that was why he had come to see me, to warn me, so that I should not be unprepared.

Not unnaturally, I thought that this tale was nonsensical and that my visitor had come in the hope of some financial reward, and I asked him exactly why he had come, pointing out to him that we were strangers and there did not seem to be any particular reason why he should have my interests at heart. If he had been concerned about a breach of the law and what his clients, or would-be clients, might do, then one would have expected that he would have gone to the police. The answer which I received surprised me when he said:

"We are not strangers, because some years ago in the middle of the hot weather when I was walking back across the desert from Lahej to Sheikh Othman, you over-took me in your motor-car; I was very tired and very thirsty, and I fully expected the car to drive by, but you stopped the car and invited me to enter and you drove me into Aden. Since that day I have been in your debt, and now I have cleared that debt."

Gratitude is a quality which is only too rare in this world, and the occasions on which people have shown their gratitude to me are so few that I have no difficulty in remembering them. I tried my best to reward him, but he refused to accept a gift of any sort and when, on my behalf, my senior Arab servant tried to persuade him to change his mind he still refused, and he went away empty handed, but with his debt discharged.

Discreet inquiries were made by the police, but nothing was ever proved, and I am glad to say that nothing ever happened, although for a time I confess that I was a trifle uneasy. There was nothing new in the method which my friend suggested the disgruntled employees might make use of to put me out of action, because only a few months before the Matron of the Civil Hospital had had acid thrown in her face and she, poor lady, was blinded. It was a ghastly and horrible business and I only wish that the villain who did it and those who instigated this deed had been caught and brought to trial. During the time that I was Governor the inquiries continued and the efforts went on to bring back the guilty people from wherever they might have taken refuge, and although we were then unsuccessful, the police have long memories and I sincerely trust that one day the guilty will be punished.

Possibly the next most unexpected visitor who came to see me in the Port Trust was M. Antonin Besse, K.B.E., the head and founder of A. Besse & Co., the principal commercial enterprise, other than the oil interests, not only in Aden but in all the surrounding territories. M. Besse was a French National and a short, very quick, dapper man always perfectly dressed in the cleanest of clean linen and with one of the quickest brains that France has ever produced. He had started in Aden as a clerk and by his own efforts and genius had built up his big trading firm, which was one of the most efficiently organised I have ever seen. Shortly before this meeting with him, which I am about to describe, he had given over a million pounds sterling to Oxford University to found St. Antony College, and that was not the only assistance which he had given to the University, for other Colleges had also benefited from his generosity. I think probably the most outstanding things about Besse were his courage and his advanced ideas with regard to the employment of local labour. He was undaunted whatever scurvy trick fate chose to serve him, and at the same time his personal relations with his local labour were always excellent. He was not always very easy to deal with and seldom worried about what people said or thought of him—and enemies he certainly had, but what successful man has not. 000

At the time of which I speak his principal business was in skins, hides, coffee, piece-goods and electrical goods, while at the same time he had innumerable shipping Agencies and a very important petrol Agency, to say nothing of his own line of coastal steamers which traded round the coast of Arabia down to Mauritius and up into the Mediterranean. I was very glad when His Majesty, King George VI, was graciously pleased to confer upon him an honorary knighthood of the British Empire for his outstanding achievements and his generosity, which had been of great benefit to the Colony. At the same time I was frankly disappointed that he had thought fit to give over a million pounds to the University of Oxford to found a new College, because there seemed to be a sufficiency of University Colleges in the United Kingdom, and what we needed so badly in Aden was a new Civil Hospital. I gave him my views and I told him that I thought he should have put the money back into the place through which he had made it, and that to have built a hospital and to have endowed it would have been a wonderful memorial which would have stood for ever. He took my criticism, my direct attack, very well; he always did, and immediately gave £50,000 to encourage technical education and the education of women in the Colony. The fine administrative block of the Technical Institute is a memorial to his generosity, and the Besse centre in Crater where women, who have not had the advantage of a school education, can learn many things, is another of his benefactions. [873] [562]

The head office messenger came hurriedly into my office:

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden .
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IMAM AHMAD BIN YAHYA—THE KING OF THE YEMEN

[facing p. 34]

"Al Besse," he announced.

"And what about M. Besse?" I inquired, somewhat irritated by the abrupt entry.

"He is here," he cried, pointing to the door.

"Here!" I exclaimed, jumping to my feet and hurrying out on to the verandah.

Sure enough there he was and somewhat out of breath, for the stairs were steep and he was no longer as young as he had been, but he was still just as active in mind as he ever had been.

"Good-morning, M. Besse, this is indeed a pleasant surprise," was my greeting.

"Good-morning," he muttered, "I thought I would call in passing as I have been to the airport to meet M. —— from Paris. He is interested in railways, you know, in Djibouti, but he didn't come. He has wasted my time. Never mind, it will be his misfortune," said M. Besse, as I conducted him into my office.

"What a nuisance for you to have had to go all that way to no purpose," I said.

"He will see, but let us talk of more agreeable things," he paused, and then said, "I have been invited to go to Djibouti."

"Are you going?" I asked, somewhat startled, because Djibouti was Aden's rival across the Gulf of Aden, and I very much hoped that Besse was not going to interest himself in the affairs of that port.

"How can I refuse? The Governor has asked me to go over and advise him about the harbour."

"I should be interested to hear what you think about the place when you come back," said I, and meant it. If Besse, who had a number of business enterprises both in Ethiopia and Eritrea and who would benefit very much indeed from an efficiently run port at the end of the railway from Addis Ababa, was going to interest himself seriously in Djibouti, then we in Aden would be hard put to it to maintain our present level of shipping.

He did not seem to have anything else of importance to say, and it soon became apparent that he had called, incidentally going a considerable distance out of his way to do so, for the

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1950 MMI Aden MMI

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H.R.H. SAIF EL ISLAM EL HASSAN, THEN PRIME MINISTER OF THE YEMEN, AND MYSELF AT ADEN AIRPORT

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[facing p. 85]

sole purpose of unsettling my mind by telling me of his proposed visit to Djibouti.

After a few minutes he rose to his feet and said:

"You will dine with me when I return and we shall see."

I conducted him down the stairs to his motor-car, and as he got into it, I said: "M. Besse, you can put all your money into Djibouti and I don't mind, but not your brains."

He looked round and smiled, but did not speak.

Some few weeks later I was asked to dinner, and as usual Mme Besse was quite charming, and the meal was delicious, with wines from their own vineyard in the South of France. Only Tony, M. Besse's youngest son, was there, and after dinner we watched a film taken at *Le Paradou*, their home in the South of France, a delightful place which some years later I was privileged to visit.

I left early because I knew that my host, who was invariably at work by half-past five in the morning, liked to retire early. Throughout the whole evening no mention was made of Djibouti, except for my purely polite hope when he greeted me on my arrival that he had had a good trip. Then, as I said good-night to him, he said:

"Hickinbotham, I have not left my brains in Djibouti."

"I am glad to hear it, Sir," I said, and I never said a truer word.

Shortly after I took over as Chairman of the Port Trust, I was sworn in as a member of the Executive Council, and I took my seat on the Council for the second time in the first half of 1948; I had been a member of the Council in 1938 and 1939. In those days we always met in the office of the Chief Secretary in the Secretariat, round an oblong table on the most uncomfortable chairs that it has ever been my misfortune to have to sit upon for hours on end; they were quite dreadful and in the meetings of the Standing Finance Committee, which were held in the same room, they were a distinct disadvantage to Government. Subconsciously, they induced in the most loyal and most docile of the unofficial members a loathing for Government and all its works which found expression in ill temper and petty objections, which I am glad to say were

000 generally withdrawn later. The official members must have been made of sterner stuff, or else they were anatomically unusual, for they never lost their unruffled calm throughout these Standing Finance Committee meetings, which were often long and tedious.

643 645 It is the Governor and the Governor alone who decides what matters should be brought before the Executive Council for their advice, and once he has submitted a subject to his Council and has been given advice, he is required to accept the unanimous view, or the majority view if unanimity is not possible. In very unusual circumstances the Governor can exercise his right to reject the advice he receives from his Council, but if he does then his reasons for so doing must be reported to the Secretary of State, and never in the ten years during which I was in one capacity or another connected with the Executive Council have I known the advice of the Council refused by the Governor.

645 [643] The procedure in Council is in no way complicated. The Governor presides and deals with routine matters first, keeping the more difficult items on the Agenda until the Council has had time to settle down; then he introduces the more complicated subjects and either invites a general discussion or seeks the views of each member individually. Sometimes there is a quick decision, and sometimes there is productive discussion, and sometimes it takes a long time before a conclusion can be arrived at, but invariably in my time did the record in the Minute Book read "... the Governor accepted the advice of Council and ordered accordingly".

I sat between the Chief Secretary and the Attorney-General when I was first an "unofficial" member of the Council. The Chief Secretary sat on the right of the Governor who always asked the views of Council in a clockwise direction, which was greatly to my advantage because I was able to benefit from hearing practically everyone speak before it came to my own turn. At least it should have been greatly to my advantage, but on occasion it was quite extraordinary how little information I could gather from the remarks of the majority of my colleagues when I had neglected to do my own homework,

2: Hickinbötham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

and how tediously verbose they seemed when I had; but 645
invariably the Attorney-General came to my rescue and I had but to agree with him and I was home, as it were. Our meetings were not at all like the free-and-easy chatty Port Trust affairs which, strangely enough, did twice the work in half the time. We were not unlike a rather serious-minded sixth form being taken by the Head in person. Individually we were a curious assortment of talent and mediocrity, inevitable in all great Services, guided very largely by remote control from London. The level in Aden was very high, and this combined with the smallness of the Aden Service made the oddities look odder than they really were. Among the various subjects which come 643
before the Executive Council I think the most difficult, and 645
certainly the most mentally disturbing, are the petitions for 696
mercy from persons who had been sentenced to death. They are, I am glad to say, few and far between. In such cases the final decision will mean life or death to one person, and make no mistake about it, although the Governor has the advice of Council and he has their aid in the decision which he has to make, the decision is not theirs—it is his. The greatest care is exercised to ensure that a right decision is given and the record of the case and the judgments of the trying Judge and the Court of Appeal are available to the Members and to His Excellency, and they all have the benefit of hearing the clear, concise and unbiased statement of the Attorney-General. There is normally no general discussion after the Attorney-General has finished speaking, but if individual Members have points which they wish to have information upon, they are raised, and when there is no more to be said then the opinions of the Members of Council are taken. This is done according to custom in an unusual way and is in rotation, beginning with the most junior Member and so in order of seniority to the Chief Secretary who is the senior of the *ex-officio* Members of the Council. The question is simple and requires a Yes or a No; it is whether or not the prerogative of mercy should be exercised.

I did not take my seat in the Legislative Council as a nomin- 000
ated Unofficial Member for some time, in fact, not until there

600 was enough business to warrant the Council being called together. Then having taken the oath and signed the Register I found myself immediately leader of the "Opposition". None of us on either side of the Council had any experience of political work or of public speaking, except perhaps for one lawyer on the Unofficial side and the Attorney-General and the Director of Education on the Government side. These gentlemen were accustomed to speaking in the Court or in the lecture hall and classroom, but that was not quite the same thing as addressing a body of men who had no desire to listen to arguments presented purely in a legalistic manner or to be "lectured", however able the lecturer; so even these gentlemen held their peace, except during the Budget Meetings when our lawyer sometimes got rather carried away, occasionally to the embarrassment of his own side, a happening, so I am informed, not confined solely to Colonial Legislatures.

665 645 There were no political parties at that time in Aden, so that we none of us represented any particular political movement and were, for the most part, elderly gentlemen representative of our own communities in the Colony who had been nominated for our proven loyalty and solid worth, rather than for our [641] aptitude for politics or any particular intelligence. No attempt was made at that time to encourage the younger generation to take a responsible part in the government of the Colony. That was to come later when we had, all of us, more experience 645 563 and were more sure of ourselves. One of the main difficulties that the Governor must have had in deciding who to nominate to represent the Arab majority of the population on the Legislative Council was that the official language of the Council was English and the common language of all the various committees was also English, and it was well-nigh impossible to find an able man of mature age among the Arabs who not only knew English but was prepared also to give up much of his time to public work. Immature lads there were, but no-one would have welcomed their appointment, least of all the more responsible members of their own community who would have had no faith in "children" as they termed them. Time was needed to mature the "children" and to accustom the grey-

beards to seeing comparatively young men in positions of 645
responsibility. In the meantime we held the fort and tried to 563
build up a tradition of sober and gentlemanly conduct in the Council which would curb the impetuosity without breaking the spirit of the younger generation when in the fullness of time they joined us and replaced us.

As the leader of the Unofficial Members in the uneasy calm 645
which had succeeded the Arab-Jewish riots in 1947, the line 662
which I took then and continued to follow throughout my 664
time on that side of the Council was that we were not in the 665
usually accepted sense of the word an opposition. Although we were on the Unofficial side of Government we were jointly responsible with our official colleagues, for decisions taken in the Council which we had supported. It was not often that we raised our voice in opposition in the public meetings of the Council, because we preferred to reserve our criticism for the privacy of the Committee room, and sharp were some of the encounters which took place behind those closed doors. You may wonder why we should be unwilling to oppose Government openly in Council. The reason was that the temperament of people in the United Kingdom and the temperament of people in the Colonies is vastly different. In the United Kingdom very few people concern themselves unduly about the views of the Members of Parliament at Westminster, and verbal duels and quarrels in the Commons seldom, if ever, have the least effect upon public tranquillity. But Parliamentary Reports which are to be found on the minor and less important pages of only a few of the daily newspapers in this country often contain material which in a Colony, in the kindergarten stage of political development, would have a very unpleasant effect. In the Aden of ten years ago a really outspoken attack on the Government by the Unofficial Members would have had but one result; it would have undermined the authority of Government outside the Council Chamber, and in consequence there would have been a deterioration in security. At such a time this would have been serious. Government understood and respected our motives.

With the full approval of my Unofficial colleagues I summoned

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up our attitude in the course of my Address to the Legislative Council in reply to the Governor's Address at the formal opening of the new Session in 1949. The Governor's Address comes on the first day of the new Session and by tradition the Senior Unofficial Member replies immediately after "Questions" on the second day. I had drafted and re-drafted my speech, and I tried to learn the beginning and the end by heart, but when eventually I found myself on my feet in the Legislative Council I cannot recall that ever before have I felt so frightened. I had often read in the reminiscences of important personages that when they made their maiden speech in the House of Commons they had wondered at first who it was that was speaking and whose was the strange voice that they were hearing. I had thought this a gross exaggeration, but when I started to speak myself on this occasion I realised the truth of the statement. My voice sounded most peculiar at first, but after a time I began to be really interested in what I was saying and ceased to be nervous, at least not panic stricken; and to be quite frank, towards the end of my maiden effort I was slightly pleased with the progress I was making, especially when I was, so to speak, on the last lap. On that occasion I used these words:

"... On behalf of my colleagues I assure Your Excellency that we are proud to be associated with, rather I should say, to be a part of, the Government of this Colony and we will ever be ready to undertake any work for the benefit of the community which Your Excellency may decide to entrust to us. We realise our responsibilities and measures necessary for the security and well-being of the people of Aden will always have our support, for only by a united and strong Government can the peace and prosperity of the Colony be assured. ..."

Two years later on a similar occasion I made the position plainer still when I said:

"... Much that I say in my address reflects the views of all

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

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or the majority of my colleagues, not always, of course, for on occasion I find myself at variance with many of my friends on this side of the Council. These differences of opinion occur even when all the members of the minority party in an assembly such as this are of one political persuasion, but they are normally subordinated to the interests of the party and the opposition generally presents a united front. Here we are not all of the same political persuasion, nor are we an opposition; we are a definite part of the Government of the Colony and as such are responsible to the people of the Colony that we do our duty in furthering their legitimate aims and safeguarding their interests, while at the same time co-operating to the full with the Official Members in all measures which are to the benefit of the Colony as a whole, distasteful though they may be to some individuals. I know that our position is little understood outside this Council and that when the younger members of the public recall that we exist, which I am afraid is not often, they are inclined to look upon us as a collection of elderly gentlemen incapable of saying 'No', who, in return for an enhanced social prestige of rather doubtful value, collect together at the bidding of the Government and agree to everything. Very natural, even some Members of Government have been known from time to time to make the same mistake, but this conception is absolutely wrong and the sooner that is realised, the better. We have our duty to do and we do it however unpleasant it may be, and what is more, we do that duty in the appropriate place—in the privacy of our Committee Room where we can, on occasion, be very outspoken, possibly too outspoken.

"We are members of one family and it ill becomes family members to differ and bicker in public if it can be avoided. Such conduct more often than not only brings discredit on the parties to the dispute with a serious loss of family prestige. Settle your differences at home and face the world united should be our policy and it is one which might be adopted by many persons outside this Council with advantage."

Strange words for the leader of an "Opposition", but it was

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

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664 a strange place, and what may suit the British, whom no-one
665 understands, does not *ipso facto* suit all the peoples of the
Colonial territories.

645 The Standing Finance Committee, to which I have referred,
652 was composed then, as it is now, of all the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council and only two of the Official Members, the Chief Secretary and the Financial Secretary, the former presiding. Here was a very heavy Unofficial majority in a very vital place, for the Standing Finance Committee controlled Government spending and carried out annually a detailed examination of the Colony Budget, a task which every spring entailed hours and hours of work and long and often acrimonious meetings, which always ended with an increase in mutual esteem. The Government men were able officials and good fellows, and you could have travelled far and long before you came upon a body of Unofficials more public spirited and less self-seeking.

645 Gradually we all became more articulate, more experienced
662 and more responsible in our actions and in our words. Our
664 main platform was the expansion of education, the provision
665 of adequate housing for the mass of the population, the provision of a good new civil hospital, and lastly, steady political development. It is curious that in those early days of the Legislative Council no-one clamoured in the Council for elections or for self-government, and we did not adopt the usual "run before you can walk" attitude of minority parties and extremists in some other Colonial Legislatures. It was not because we were apathetic, but rather, I suppose, because being older men than is usual in such institutions we were more alive to our own and other people's limitations and realised that we must learn our job before we could ask for promotion. At the same time we realised also that what was in one way our strength, for it indicated experience, was also our weakness, for some of us were too set in our ways to welcome change in a rapidly changing world. The yeast of youth was needed to leaven the experience of age, and I am glad to say that we did realise that, and in 1950 on behalf of my colleagues I stressed this point when I said:

"At the same time I feel it my duty to say that we realise 645
that in the not too distant future an awakening sense of 662
responsibility among the younger members of the community 664
may justify Your Excellency's successor in making changes in 665
the membership on the Unofficial side of the Council. If and when that time comes, I shall have occasion to refer to this later, we will be very willing and ready to do all that we can to co-operate. The honour of office has its undoubted attractions, just as it has its responsibilities, but those, and we trust that you will consider us among them, who really have the good and well-being of the people of the Colony at heart do not need the spur of public office to induce them to sacrifice their time and sometimes interests for the good of the community."

These may have been the words of one man, but it must be realised that they were the sentiments of all the Unofficial Members who had approved these words at a private meeting held in my office some days earlier. It was a broad enough hint for anyone, but little did I realise then that they were, in fact, addressed to myself and that it was I who was destined to be His Excellency's successor.

I am afraid that neither the Press nor the public were much 645
interested in our work in the Council; there was nothing 204
spectacular, it was not "news" and not even that section of the 208
Press which was already beginning to write of self-government
in a most uninstructed manner and to put forward the claims
of Arabic to be recognised as an official language, took the
trouble to be present at the Reporters' table during the
ordinary meetings of the Council. This does not mean that [643]
editors and reporters were absent from the official opening ceremony of each new Session of the Council; this was our one gala day of the year when the Governor, in full uniform, complete with feathers in his hat, and wearing his Orders and Decorations, with guards of honour and salutes, formally opened the new Session and delivered "the gracious Address", after handing decorations to those whom His Majesty had been graciously pleased to honour. This was quite a different state

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204 of affairs; it was a spectacle, it was "news", and what was no
208 less attractive a social occasion of the first magnitude. The élite
of Aden society were there and the editors were not left out,
but when the tumult had died down and the multitude
departed, the editors, who were often their own reporters,
were found to have gone as well.

619 It must not be imagined that real feeling about the political
[665] future of the Colony was non-existent. There were many
people who were, in fact, seriously concerned, and a number
of individuals looked forward to the time when they would
be able to have a greater share in the control of their own
affairs, but at that time there was nothing in the nature of a
"party", as we understand the term in this country, inspired
with nationalist ideas in any section of the community.

177 The Arab awakening was being accelerated by the rapid
668 educational developments in the Colony and by the radio; the
[204] first a good influence, the second poisonous to young minds
[208] with its half-truths, anti-British propaganda and reports of
riots and students' demonstrations, which were such a feature
of those years. The first phase of this awakening was the
realisation that with few exceptions the worthwhile work in
the Colony was in the hands of foreigners to Aden, and the
younger generation began to wonder and to ask why strangers
had the cream of the employment while they had to make do
464 with what was left. Mercifully the trade expansion after the
war was creating fresh employment daily and there was work
for every employable lad on leaving school, and I regret to
say, very often before he should have left school. The murmuring
did not go unheeded by the Unofficial Members of the
Legislative Council and we warned Government that there
would be trouble unless the rights of local men and women to
priority in employment, provided they were capable of doing
the work, were recognised both by Government and by the
employers. The warning was heeded by Government, but not
by some of the "foreign" employers who claimed, not without
reason, that the local article was not up to the standard of the
imported. These employers continued to take advantage of a
surplus of semi-skilled workers in India, which had been

brought about by the labour displacement which had resulted from the partition of the Indian sub-Continent. Government took measures to restrict immigration, and although they were not as stringent as they might have been, they did a great deal of good and gave time for the idea to take root that it was economically sound as well as politically expedient, to give preference to local candidates for employment and try to train them up to the required degree of efficiency. One of the results which derived directly from the immigration restrictions was a realisation by a number of local employers that, in fact, the local product, with opportunity and encouragement, could do the work, certainly just as well and sometimes better than the imported article and this, in turn, produced another and equally serious problem when boys commenced to leave Aden College and the Technical Institute before completing their educational course, tempted away by offers of remunerative employment which their parents found impossible to resist. So did the solving of one problem produce yet another to puzzle the minds and occupy the time, not only of Government officials, but also of the amateur legislators in the Legislative Council.

Before leaving the subject of the Legislative Council I should like to record that I always received the greatest consideration and courtesy from the Members, both when I was one of them, and later when for five years I presided over their proceedings. My position as President, having already been "in opposition to Government" did, on occasion, have its humorous side when, for instance, a certain very persistent and eloquent leader of one of the minority communities, who had been an Unofficial Member for years and was generally armed with a large assortment of documents and references when he spoke, not infrequently prefaced his remarks with the following:

"Your Excellency will no doubt recall what the Senior Unofficial Member said in 1949." My assurance to the honourable gentleman that I did recall what I had said never for one moment prevented him from reading out the extract with which he had fortified himself, but mercifully, for a reason which I could only assume must have been divinely inspired, I appear to have been discretion itself between 1948 and 1951; most extraordinary.

There is one other subject which, although it only indirectly concerned the Legislative Council at first, became later very much an affair of the Legislative Council, about which I shall record my own somewhat short-sighted conduct.

631 In 1945 the Government had raided the Municipal larder and
632 taken over the profit-making Electricity Department and the
[655] equally financially satisfactory Water Department, and at the
[365] same time they abolished the old Settlement Authority and
created a Township Authority, which was, in fact, much the same thing as a municipality but with much reduced powers. This latter was a retrograde step with which I personally was never in accord and which was generally resented, and it was not surprising that early in 1948 the newspapers began to clamour for increased powers for the Township Authority or its conversion into a fully fledged municipality. At the same time there began a demand for the election of the Members and one particular section of the Press was loud in pressing for municipal reforms of the most far-reaching character.

641 Now, I was not in favour of elections, believing that the time was not ripe for such a very big step forward and in consequence I found myself at variance with most of the other Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council, who favoured elections in the municipal field of politics, but not necessarily in the legislative field. However, I was not altogether alone in my opposition because Mackawee felt much the same as I did and one morning he came into the Port Trust Office, shook hands rather limply, sat down and folded one of his long thin legs over the other and said nothing. He looked rather tired and I asked how he was feeling.

"I am not well, I have not been well since I retired from business and gave up my work; that was a very foolish thing to do," he said.

"Have you seen a doctor?" I asked.

"I have seen all the doctors in Aden and most of those in Bombay," was his answer.

"Have you followed their advice?" I inquired.

"Yes, and that is why I am feeling so unwell, mentally unwell. The honest ones say there is nothing physically wrong with me, while the rogues, and they are in the majority, have given me a great deal of advice and I have given them a great deal of money. They said give up Qat which I had taken for fifty years in moderation. As a brain stimulant it is very good, but taken to excess, as most people do, it is very harmful and the ruination of the Arabs in this Colony. However, I gave it up and then they said stop eating this or that, and I stopped. Next they advised me to stop smoking and I took their advice for a time. I drink nothing but water, so there was nothing I could give up there, and in fact I have now reached the stage where there is nothing left to give up, except living, and I was very nearly about to do that. Very nearly. I realise that my complaint is incurable; it is old age and there is nothing the doctors can do about that, and besides, now that I have taken up public work again I am better than I was. Sometimes I think that all these meetings are killing me, but the truth is that I should probably die without them. Anyway, I have come to see you about these people and not to talk about my own troubles," said he.

"What people?" I asked.

"These foolish people who are asking for elections. Something must be done. We do not understand elections and the time for them has not come. When our people are more educated will be time enough to introduce elections, but on the other hand Government were wrong when they curtailed the powers of the local Authority and abolished the Settlement, which was really a municipality. However, that has been done, and Government will only make matters worse now if they listen to these chatterers who do not know what they are talking about. The time will come, of course it will come, when we shall have elections and when we shall manage our own affairs, but first we must be trained and something should be done."

He stopped and gazed out of the window.

"I agree with you that the time is not ripe for these changes and I, personally, shall try and delay the introduction of these elections, because I think they will be a danger," I said.

"They are dangerous," he murmured, and rose rather abruptly, shook hands and drifted away.

I tried to delay the coming of elections, and I am glad to say that I failed.

CHAPTER FOUR

First Acquaintance with the Protectorate

I SHALL always remember my first conversation with a tribesman from the Protectorate. It was short and it consisted of two simple questions, one asked by myself and one by the tribesman. It came about in this way. I was at a race meeting, which was at that time an annual event and was held on the golf course at Khormaksar. One of the races on the card was a camel race, and I was watching these rather smelly animals being led round the ring prior to the race, when I noticed that a young Arab tribesman was standing on one side of me. He was a good-looking, well-made young man clad in the traditional blue kilt, held in place with a leather cartridge belt, and on his feet he had a pair of rough leather sandals, while his long hair was kept in place by a strip of blue cloth bound round his head. It occurred to me that he should know something about camels and with a view to a little inside information to help me beat the Tote, I decided to ask his advice. With this object in view I asked the Indian Veterinary Officer, who spoke Arabic and who was standing on the other side, to ask the Arab what his name was as a preliminary to the more important information I sought. The reply from the Arab was short and forceful, and the Indian looked rather shocked and somewhat reluctant to translate for me what the Arab had said. All he would say was that the Arab was an ignorant fellow who knew no better. Eventually I persuaded him to tell me the worst. This was the brief conversation:

"The Sahib would like to know your name," said the Indian to the Arab.

"What has it got to do with him?" replied the Arab.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

600 Just two sentences, but very revealing. What business was it of mine; what indeed? It was precisely the answer I should have given myself if I had been asked by a stranger a similar question on any day when I was feeling a trifle irritable. Also it was the exact opposite of the type of answer I should have received from an Indian, and it was then that I began to realise that the Arabs were fundamentally different from the majority of Asiatics I had met up to that time.

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361 My first real trip into the Protectorate came in 1932 when I drove to Dhala, the capital of the Amirate of the same name. Dhala, which continues to figure rather largely in the daily Press in this country as the result of Yemeni incursions into the area, is a small, rather uninteresting and rather sinister-looking town of dirty grey houses which climb up the side of a hill. [133] The Dhala plateau is about 4,500 ft. high and is surrounded by [64+8] hill features, the finest of which is Jebel Jihaf, a magnificent massif 8,000 ft. high. The town is but a few miles from the Yemen border and raiding by the Yemen was by no means uncommon even in those days.

000 I stayed in the old castle which overlooks the town and crowns the hill, and well I remember having to leave the car and walk the last few hundred feet from where the road ended, up the steep footpath to the castle entrance. My luggage and that of my companion was unloaded by my servants, and the problem of carrying it up the hill was solved by a total stranger who called rather peremptorily to a half-dozen dreary passers-by, who I remember noticing had long side curls, not unlike the present-day Teddy boys. These dismal-looking fellows stopped without protest and at once seized the baggage and bore it off up the hill. When I reached the top myself and had exchanged preliminary courtesies with the Amir's representative, I inquired how much I should give the bearers, what amount would be a suitable reward for their labour. I was young and I had not been among the people of the Protectorate before and was, therefore, inexperienced in these matters. The Amir's representative looked surprised.

"Nothing," he said.

"But I must," said I.

"No, no. There is no necessity, they are Jews," said he. 000

"But what has that got to do with it, they worked for me," I said.

"You do not understand. They are Jews," he said with a marked patience, as if talking to a child.

I argued no more but sent my servant with a small reward; whether it reached them or not I do not know.

There were then several thousand Jews living in the Protectorate with a greater measure of security than they enjoyed in Central Europe. They were the artisans and the gold and silversmiths, and their houses were grouped together and generally slightly removed from the Arab quarters of the town. Every small town in the north-western area of the Protectorate had one of these Jewish quarters. They were not interfered with and they could and they did own land and they were useful to the Arabs and lived in peace with them. They were not involved in tribal disputes and it was considered something of a personal disgrace to kill a Jew. When they left some years later, drawn almost against their will by a force they could scarcely understand to Palestine, their need was felt and more than one Ruler tried to persuade them not to go. When they insisted on going they were not unreasonably treated by the Protectorate Rulers and were allowed to sell their land, unlike the Yemen where all the property of emigrating Jews became State property. 563

My next trip into the Protectorate was of a very different character and came some two years later. I flew to Mukeiras with the Resident and Portal,[1] then A.O.C. in Aden, and Douglas Macfadyen,[2] then a Flight Lieutenant. Mukeiras was and still is the capital of the Audhali Plateau, and it was there that the Resident was to meet the young Audhali Sultan and his uncle, the Regent, to receive their thanks for the efforts which he had made on their behalf during his negotiations with the Yemen for the 1934 Treaty: this had resulted in the evacuation by the Zeidi forces of the whole of the Audhali Plateau as a prerequisite to the signature of the Treaty. 000 [632] [648] [728]

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[1] Marshal of the Royal Air Force Viscount Portal, K.G., G.C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

[2] Air Marshal Sir Douglas Macfadyen, K.C.B., C.B.E., A.O.C.-in-C. Home Command R.A.F.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

000 We arrived unhurriedly on the small landing ground at Mukeiras; the Fairey 2 F.s never hurried, but they generally got to their destination, which was just as well because they were single-engined aircraft and the Protectorate has an unduly large proportion of sharp rocky hills to nice flat open spaces suitable for a forced landing.

[291] We were met on arrival by a seething mass of blue-kilted tribesmen led by the young Sultan, Saleh bin Hussein[1] bin Jabil, and the Regent, Sultan Mohd bin Jabil, and the Sultan's father, Hussein bin Jabil. It was my first meeting with the Sultan who was later to become my personal friend and one of the staunchest and most loyal of the Rulers of the Protectorate. At that time he was just a nice-looking lad and I was more interested in the Regent, a hook-nosed middle-aged man, crafty and, I was to learn later, unreliable, and also in the Sultan's father Hussein, a fine figure of a man with an open frank countenance and a charming smile, which his son has inherited. Hussein was killed some years later not far from Mukeiras in a tribal dust-up with the Rassasis, a tribe which lies to the Yemen side of the *status quo* frontier. His death was a loss to his people, to his son and to us.

[184] [574] As we walked forward towards the village surrounded by and followed by a crowd of tribesmen, some cattle and goats were led out and slaughtered in front of us, a disgusting business, but required by tradition on such great occasions. Incidentally, they provided the basis of the meal we would eat later. Quite often in the future I tried to stop the barbarous custom, and sometimes I was successful, much to the disappointment of the poorer elements who invariably benefit by being given the remnants of the feast.

On arrival at the village we were led into a small house to await the final preparation of lunch; while we were waiting for the meal a diversion was caused by a stout gentleman with a fine black beard walking into the room. He gave a general greeting to the company there assembled and his arrival appeared to cause some surprise to many of those present, although I am certain that the Regent was well aware of his presence in Mukeiras. He was none other than Alawi Ahmad from Beihan, a State farther to the north, and he was in disgrace for an outrage against the Sharif of Beihan and had had to be taken very severely to task. He had been called upon to come to Aden and answer for his sins to the Political Secretary, and when he had failed to appear had been ordered to pay a quite substantial fine by a given date, and as he had failed to pay the fine air action had been taken against his property, that is to say, against his fortified house and damage to the extent of the fine had been done. It was the established procedure in such cases, and honour was satisfied, and normally there were no complaints, but Alawi Ahmad was clearly upset about something, and he had come to put his complaint in person to the Resident.

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[1] Sultan Saleh bin Hussein, C.M.G., C.B.E.

He asked permission to speak and when it was granted we found that the substance of his complaint was that the usual twenty-four hours' warning of air action had been duly received by him and he had promptly removed his family from his tribal tower to a place of safety, together with such of his household furnishing as were portable. According to his story, however, although the second warning, which was always given one hour before the arrival of the aircraft which were to carry out the bombing, had been given and received, the planes had beaten the gun, and started to bomb a quarter of an hour before they should have done, with the unhappy result that two of his goats had been killed. This was the substance of his complaint, though he had a great deal more to say about his difficulties and troubles with his Ruler, but this was neither the time nor the place and he was persuaded to leave, which he did without any more fuss, satisfied at having been heard, which in fact was really all that he had wanted.

After lunch, accompanied by the Sultan and his relatives and all the tribesmen, villagers and sightseers, we walked back to the landing ground and re-embarked in our aircraft. My pilot who was Portal was the first to take off and he did so with quite extraordinary promptness, becoming airborne before two-thirds of the small runway were passed, whereas normally every inch of ground was used while the passenger gazed

006 fascinated at a low rather disagreeable ridge at the end of the runway until it had passed underneath the aeroplane, or closed his eyes until he hoped that it had, depending entirely on his temperament. The rest of the journey was uneventful, and on arrival at Khormaksar, Macfadyen said to Portal:

"You came off very quickly, Sir."

"Yes, I hit something halfway down the runway, found myself in the air and thought I had better try and stay there," was the reply with a smile. He had stayed there, all was well, and so ended my first visit to the Audhali country.

The foregoing is just a preliminary introduction to the Protectorate and the independent people that live there, but I am afraid for the real understanding of much that I have got to say I shall have to give a more detailed description of the area.

131 On the south the Protectorate is bounded by the sea, the
133 Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, and it stretches from the rocky outcrop of small hills at Sheikh Said in the south-west corner of Arabia opposite to the island of Perim, some 740 miles to the East to Ras Darbat Ali where begins the territory of His Highness the Sultan of Muscat and Oman. The coast, except for the first 130 miles, is rugged with mountains rising steeply within a few miles of the beach; in places they rise abruptly from the sea, and for the most part, to use a nautical term, the coast is "steep to". Where the exception occurs is in the immediate neighbourhood of Aden itself, which is 100 miles from Sheikh Said and it is here that the coastal plain reaches its greatest depth of approximately 30 miles.

131 The next of the frontiers which can be quickly and easily described is that between the Protectorate and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman. It is a straight line drawn from Ras Darbat Ali at right angles to the coast in a northerly direction up into the Ruba al Khali or "Empty Quarter", the great central desert of Arabia. Unfortunately the Ruba al Khali is empty no longer for of recent years it has been rather overfull of oil prospectors, most of whom are American, but I shall refer to this later. At latitude 19°, the most northerly point of this frontier, there meet the lands of the Protectorate, the territory of Muscat and Oman and the territory claimed by His Majesty

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

King Saud bin Abdul Aziz Ahl Saud of Saudi Arabia. This eastern frontier has never been demarcated, nor has it ever been in dispute, Her Majesty's Government and His Highness Saiyid Said bin Taimur, G.C.M.G., G.C.I.E., the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, being in agreement on this, as on many other subjects. It is, of course, understood by both Governments that from time to time, and in particular if and when demarcation becomes necessary, there may have to be minor adjustments. His Highness has always been a wise and good neighbour and there is no doubt that should adjustments in the frontier line have to be made, then good sense will prevail and mutual agreement will not be difficult to achieve. I wish that the Rulers of Saudi Arabia and the Yemen had proved such agreeable neighbours for then the Foreign Office, the Colonial Office and the Governor of Aden would have had a much easier time of recent years.

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We come now to the most difficult frontiers, the western frontier separating the Protectorate from the Kingdom of the Yemen. In 1872 the Yemen had become, for the second time in the troubled history of that country, a part of the Ottoman Empire and was to remain a Turkish province until the end of the Great War of 1914–18. In 1902 it was decided by the British Government and the Sublime Porte that it was desirable to demarcate the frontier between the Turkish province of the Yemen and the territories of the Rulers in treaty relations with His Majesty's Government, in other words, the Aden Protectorate. One of the main reasons for this was to prevent border disputes which must always arise when a frontier has not been clearly defined on the ground and where the tribes under the authority of one country are at enmity with those under the authority of the other. Demarcation does not automatically stop these squabbles but it does make the determination of guilt easier and enables action to be taken quickly, always an essential, to punish the offenders. In that year the Anglo-Turkish Boundary Commission began their work at Sheikh Said in the extreme south-west corner of Arabia. The work was very difficult, not only because innumerable territorial tribal disputes had to be resolved, but also because of the

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mountainous nature of the country in which the Commission had to work. As they moved farther and farther into the interior in a north-easterly direction the mountains became more and more inaccessible, but by 1903 they had reached Dhala the capital of Amirate of the same name which had come into treaty relations with Her Majesty's Government in 1880. In 1904 the Boundary Commission was withdrawn, the demarcation having been completed only as far as a high point slightly north-north-east of the Yemen town of Qataba.

The decision to withdraw the Boundary Commission and abandon the further demarcation of the frontier was due in part to the difficulty of operating in the high mountains of Yafa which the Commission would have had to face next, and in part to the fact that as the Commission moved farther into the interior of Arabia the degree of effective control by the Turks and ourselves on our respective sides of the frontier became less and less. It was decided, therefore, by the two Governments that from there on they should define their respective spheres of influence by means of a line drawn on the map. A violet line; the colour is important, because the habit of drawing lines on a map is infectious, and we shall see when we come to the northern frontier of the Protectorate that more lines have been drawn on the map of Arabia, all of different colours.

The violet line started from the last point demarcated and was drawn at an angle of 45° up into the northern reaches of the Rub-al-Khali. It then turned abruptly due north and ran up to the base of the Qatar Peninsula. Qatar, one of the rich oil-producing areas of the world, is a British Protected Sheikhdom jutting out into the Persian Gulf. The demarcated line and the violet line thus became the dividing line between the spheres of influence in Arabia of the British Empire and the Turkish Empire. The agreement was ratified by both Governments in 1914 as the Anglo-Turkish Convention.

There has been one very serious contravention of this frontier line and that was in the early nineteen-twenties, when the Imam of the Yemen overran the Rassasi Sultanate which lay on the Protectorate side of the violet line between the Protectorate States of the Audhali Sultan and the Sharif of

Beihan. The Rassasi Sultan was not in treaty relation with the British Government. He had expressed a strong desire in 1914 when the Audhali Sultan entered into treaty relations with us, to do the same, but the Government of Bombay, after reference to the Government of India, who were careful of their money where Aden was concerned, was not prepared to find the hundred pounds or so a year which the Rassasi Sultan insisted upon as an annual gift. The Rassasi Sultans have never ceased to regret the failure of the negotiations. The present Ruler is a prisoner, if indeed he is still alive, in the State Prison in Sana, the ancient capital of the Yemen.

Lastly we come to the northern frontier line which joins the eastern and western frontiers across the Ruba-al-Khali. It is a simple matter to put it on the map. Just take a point on the blue line rather north of latitude 18° and draw a reasonably straight line (it is not quite straight at the beginning) eastward to join the eastern frontier at latitude 19°. It is all very easy to do now, but this simple line represents years of consultation and endless conferences. It had a number of predecessors and they were all of different colours, red, blue and black, some were ours and some were other peoples, but generally speaking they all represented a British reverse at the conference table. It was all very unfortunate and where we should have ended will, I am glad to say, never be known, for there occurred two fundamental changes. Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, that astute and absolute Ruler of Saudi Arabia, that really great man, died, and the wastes of Arabia became peopled with oil prospectors.

By 1955 the oil search had been carried by the Americans, who operate the Dhahran concession in Saudi Arabia, right down into the southern reaches of the Ruba-al-Khali and the Iraq Petroleum Company, through their satellite Petroleum Concessions Limited, who hold the exploration concession for the Aden Protectorate, were engaged actively in their exploration work and were moving steadily northward. Something had to be done and it had to be done quickly. It was. Her Majesty's Government announced what was, in effect, the *de facto* northern frontier of the Protectorate, the present line I have described and at the same time it was indicated to those

131 648 interested that trespassers would be dealt with in an appropriate manner; as indeed they were in 1955, as we shall see.

131 2331 221 This northern frontier follows very closely the territorial limits of the bedouin tribes, who are based on the Aden Protectorate, rather I should say, it follows the limits of their home grazing areas, for they are great travellers and wander far up into Saudi Arabia when scarcity of grazing forces them to take their herds of camels farther and farther afield; just as the Saudi Arabian tribes came south into the Protectorate when their own grazing has suffered from lack of rain. One often hears a lot of nonsense about being as free as the Arab of the desert. The Arab of the desert is no more free than the city worker who has to catch the 7.30 a.m., or whatever train it may be, to London, on five days of the week. The Arab must go where God has willed the rain to fall and the grass and other herbage to grow, otherwise he and his flock will die; he is not free to wander at will, he is bound, inexorably bound to follow the rain.

[133] Another advantage of this line is that it follows generally, but not exactly, the southern limits of the great sand dunes of the Ruba-al-Khali, dunes which are clearly defined and which rise in places to several hundred feet, almost one could say a natural frontier. Lastly, it is the limit of our effective control and although it is not ideal, it is practical and definite and not subject to yet another conference.

131 So much for the limits of the Protectorate, and now I must correct a misapprehension which seems to be fairly general with regard to its size. Many people in this country are under the impression that the Aden Protectorate is a small area approximating in size to that of one of the larger English counties; in fact, of course, it is nearly twenty-five per cent. larger than the whole of the United Kingdom including Northern Ireland.
133 In the west it is predominantly hilly, once the coastal plain is crossed, and the average height of the territory is some 3,500 ft., that is very nearly as high as Snowdon. The mountain ranges run east and west and are separated by plains and plateaux, each successive range being higher than the last until, on the line of Yafa and the Audhali country, the mountains reach a

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI
Yemen ML1

maximum height of 8,000 ft., and the plains range in height A 133
from that of Dhala in the west, which is 4,500 ft., to that of the Audhali plateau in the centre, which is 6,750 ft. Thereafter the mountains and plains decrease in height the farther north they go until nothing remains but the great central Arabian desert, the Ruba-al-Khali with an average height of 2,500 ft.

Over in the east the coastal plain rapidly gives way to the great Plateau of the Jōl, a tableland deeply cut by rifts and valleys, the greatest of which is the famous Wadi Hadhramaut in the north. Thereafter the tableland ends abruptly and then begins the northern plain which runs up to the southern limits of the great sand dunes of the central desert.

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The full history of South-west Arabia, that is, of the Aden Protectorate and the Kingdom of the Yemen, has never been written and the travellers' tales of the Aden Protectorate and the historical records that do exist of the early history of the Yemen give no more than a glimpse of a period of history or of the authors' immediate surroundings. I do not propose to attempt to remedy this deficiency, but I must, for the proper understanding of my subject, give a brief historical outline of the events which led to the coming into existence of the Aden Protectorate in the form in which it was in 1931 when I first came to have personal acquaintance with that fascinating country. There has been no fundamental change in the form of the Protectorate since then, although as we shall see later, there has, of recent years, been considerable political and economic development.

Y 175 648 643
At about the time that these islands of ours were being conquered for the last time in their history by William the Norman, the Imam of the Yemen had overrun much of what is now the Western Aden Protectorate and was in effective control of the tribes between Lahej, Aden's near neighbour, and Loder the capital of the Audhali Sultanate. The Imam was not left in possession for very long, and the records show that in the latter half of the eleventh century the Abdalis of Lahej and the other tribes more remote from the Yemen border broke away from the Imamic control and once again became

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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI
Yemen ML1

800 independence. They remained independent until the Yemeni
Y Imam was sufficiently strong internally to try again to expand
175 the limits of his kingdom, but it was not until the middle of
648 the fourteenth century that the Imam of the time was able to
re-establish his control over Lahej.

A hundred years later the pendulum swung back again for
a brief period, and we find the Imam of that time trying to
Y crush an internal rebellion which seems to have had its origin
175 in Lahej and was led by one Malik Ali and his brother. The
648 Imam was unsuccessful and Malik Ali eventually established
721 himself on the Imamic throne and the Yemen's control of the
643 border tribes, including Lahej, was again established and continued
until the middle of the sixteenth century when the
Yemen was overrun by the Turks and it became a Province
of the Ottoman Empire and remained as such for nearly one
hundred years until the middle of the seventeenth century
when, on the Turks evacuating the country, the Imam was
able to re-establish his authority, not only in his own country
A but to some degree over the areas of the Protectorate adjacent
669 to the Yemen. The magic hundred played its part again, and
by the thirties of the eighteenth century disturbances in the
648 Yemen itself weakened the authority of the Imam and gave an
175 opportunity to the Sultans of Lahej, and indeed the other
Protectorate tribes, to break away and once more become
independent. A hundred years later and we came on the scene
and there began to come into existence that series of Treaties
which has established the Aden Protectorate as we know it at
A the present day.

This very brief historical sketch would not be complete
175 without mentioning the second coming of the Turks, which
648 occurred in the last century. They overran the Yemen, they
divested the Imam of his temporal authority and once again
they turned the country into a Turkish province. Not content
with their gains in the Yemen they poured over into the Protectorate
and in May 1872 were on the borders of Lahej but
a short distance from the town of Aden itself. There they
remained for some time and then withdrew back into the
Yemen, but it is not clear what caused them to do so because

Yemen ML I

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there does not seem to have been any offensive action on our part of sufficient magnitude to force them out of the Protectorate.

When I was searching for information about South-west Arabia, and it was only then that I realised how little had been written about that part of the world, I came on the following passage referring to this Turkish incursion in the only book published about Aden itself:

"Representations were at once made by Her Majesty's Government to the Porte who gave assurances that the troops would be withdrawn; but this was not done. . . ." (The troops in question were either Turkish regular soldiers or Turkish led Yemeni irregulars.) The account continued: ". . . the Government of India authorised the Resident to support the Lahej Sultan but not to attack the Turks. . . ."[1]

The Resident advanced into Lahej territory with a small armed force and the British and the Turks looked at each other for a period of seven months and then the Turks retired back into the Yemen. How often, in more recent years, have I been given precisely the same kind of contradictory instructions! Too often. Times may change, but the attitude of Government remains much the same and back-seat driving has been much facilitated by improved communications, with the result that nowadays the responsible officer on the spot either becomes so accustomed to referring to London that when in an emergency events outstrip even modern communications and he is required to use his own initiative, he is incapable of doing so and his "health" breaks down, or he refuses to submit to remote control, loses his temper, and "health" once again is invoked to explain his early retirement.

The important question is how was the Protectorate formed and why even to this day, when the Rulers of the Protectorate are under foreign domination, "British domination", have they always rejected the overtures of the Imams of the Yemen, who are like themselves Arabs and are, to a degree, their co-religionists. The answer to the second half of the question is that the Imam of the Yemen has always been, and still is, not

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[1] Hunter's *Statistical Account of the British Settlement of Aden*, 1877, p. 169.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1
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771 only the temporal head of that country but is the spiritual
795 leader of the Zeidi sect, which is composed of those Shiahs
993 who follow the teaching of Muhammed Ibn Zeid, an inter-
175 preter of the sayings of the Prophet Muhammed. The Imams
trace their descent to Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, and
it is only of comparatively recent years that the Imamic
leadership has changed in character from the primarily spiritual
to the predominantly temporal, and even so, it has never lost
Y the essential spiritual element.

771 The majority of the inhabitants of the Yemen are of the
795 Sunni division of Islam and subscribe to the teachings of As
642 Sha'afi, another renowned interpreter of the sayings of the
643 Prophet. Thus successive Imams have maintained their temporal
798 authority in their country with the aid of the religious minority,
175 the tough Zeidi tribesmen of the Highlands. This they have
done with remarkable success and even today the Sha'afi
majority of the country have no real say in the government.
From time to time the Sha'afis have striven to rid themselves
of their Zeidi oppressors, but their success has never been more
than temporary and partial and the Imams have, for their
part, been quite ruthless in re-establishing their authority,
A and although they have had the prerogative of mercy it has
Y seldom, if ever, been exercised. Politically and socially the
771 Yemen has not advanced beyond the sixteenth century in
178 Europe, and if one thinks for a moment about our own religious
difficulties in this country at that period of history, it will not
be difficult to understand the intense distrust which exists
between the Zeidis and the Sha'afis, not only in the Yemen,
but beyond the borders of that country in the Aden Protectorate where all the people are of the Sha'afi Sect of Islam.
There you have the fundamental reason for the existence of
A the Aden Protectorate.

175 The Protectorate came into being by mutual agreement,
648 and we were in effect invited to become the paramount power.
It was not in any way the conquest of a primitive and defenceless people by an up-to-date Western power with modern armament. In 1839, when we had established ourselves in what is now the Colony of Aden, the tribes of the hinterland were,

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as they are to a large extent today, disunited, and in consequence, were in no position to resist the increasing power of the Yemen. The Imam of that time had settled his internal affairs, which had always been a brake on the territorial ambitions of the Imams, and was turning his attention to the establishment of his authority farther afield. Successfully to resist Yemen domination the tribes would have to unite or else ally themselves with a power capable of protecting them. Unity was at that time not practical politics so that there was, in fact, really no alternative but to find a big friend to protect them from the Zeidi bully. It was, therefore, with some relief that, once the initial shock of our boisterous arrival had passed, they turned to this new and undoubtedly powerful stranger for that protection which was vital to them if they were to escape domination by the Zeidis. Naturally enough it was the tribes in the immediate neighbourhood of Aden who were the first to enter into protective agreements, but gradually as our prestige spread fanwise through South-west Arabia, more and more tribes not under the immediate domination of the Imam of the Yemen, came into alliance with us, until by 1914 the Aden Protectorate had come into being in its present form.

We, for our part, were very ready to enter into these engagements with the tribes and for very nearly the same reason. We had but newly arrived in Aden and secured a foothold on the shore of Arabia and, following the practice which we had found to be so successful in India and which, to the surprise and alarm of the East India Company brought practically the whole of that sub-Continent under the British flag, were anxious to surround our new possession and its valuable harbour with friendly States which would act as a buffer between our property and any potential enemy from the landward side. Our motives were entirely selfish and our conduct remained so until this present century was well advanced.

The Treaties which were entered into between the Indian Government, acting as the agent for the paramount power the British Government, and the tribal leaders during this period were all in much the same form. The tribes undertook through their Rulers not to enter into negotiation with or to alienate

175 648 their territory to any foreign power without the previous permission of the Government of India. In return we undertook to protect them from external aggression. Those were the main clauses, but there were, of course, subsidiary clauses which differed from Treaty to Treaty and which related to freedom of access to each other's territory, the protection of trade routes and similar matters. The main object of the Treaties was protection, protection from the Yemen as far as the tribes were concerned, and protection from the Yemen and the tribes themselves as far as we were concerned.

As the years went by and the buffer grew in size as more and more States came into alliance, so did our responsibilities to the people of the area grow, although it took us nearly a hundred years to realise our obligations, which we have not yet adequately discharged.

642 631 The States are twenty-five in number, of which the Sultanate of Lahej is the senior, not only by virtue of its importance, but also because it was the first to enter into treaty relations with Her Majesty's Government. They vary greatly in size from the 40,000 square miles of the Quaiti Sultanate of Shihr and Mukalla, to the few unproductive acres of the Sultan of Bir Ali, an insignificant little sea port. The Rulers, who are either Sultans or Sheikhs or Amirs, or even Naqibs—it makes no difference to the importance of the State what title is held by the Ruler—are all independent in so far as their internal authority is concerned, and the only curbs on their power are tradition and the degree of independence of the people themselves. [184] [641] This latter varies with the geographical position and the nature of the terrain of the State. In the Yafa Highlands, which are almost inaccessible, every tribesman is a law unto himself and pays little heed to the titular leader, the Upper Yafa Sultan, unless the land is in grave danger when they rally to him until the danger is passed. In the Lowlands and in the Southern plain where the States are more vulnerable, there is a greater degree of obedience by the tribesmen to the authority of their Ruler, and such is the case where tribal territory abuts on to the Yemen in open country; country where the fear of Zeidi raids is greatest.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

First Acquaintance with the Protectorate 184

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The people are, as I was quick to realise after I had seen and
spoken to the tribesmen at the Khormaksar races, independent
and virile, and later I was to find that they did not lack a sense
of humour. In the Highlands they dress, even to this day, in [291]
blue cotton kilts which reach to the knee, leaving the upper [302]
part of the body bare, except for the vegetable oil and blue
dye with which they rub their skin as a protection against the
sun in summer and the cold in winter. The kilt is held in place [4-11]
by a leather cartridge belt which in turn supports a dagger,
generally with a silver scabbard. A rifle and a pair of leather
sandals complete the picture, except in the Colony where
rifles and daggers, except for the privileged few, have to be
surrendered to authority on entrance, and may not be carried 177
on the person. In the Colony, too, and indeed in the more 178
developed areas of the Protectorate, the blue kilt has given 291
place to brightly coloured kilts made from silk and cotton 439
cloth imported from Indonesia and India, and the blue dye and
oil have been replaced by shirts and coats, and indeed, by
collars and ties and trousers when the owners have come to
this country either on business or for pleasure.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML1

CHAPTER FIVE

Yemen Relations

648 928 THE Imams of the Yemen have always looked upon us as interlopers in South-west Arabia and have never given up their claim to the whole of what is now the Aden Protectorate and to the Colony of Aden itself, and have never ceased to strive to extend their authority into the Protectorate, except possibly for a short period after the conclusion of the Treaty of Sana in 1934. We, for our part, have always endeavoured to maintain friendly relations with the Yemen and at the same time to honour our obligations to the Protectorate Rulers whose territories we have undertaken to protect from external aggression.

The negotiations which culminated in the Treaty of Sana in 1934 began shortly after the Great War had seen the collapse of the Turkish Empire and the emergence once more of
643 the Imam as a temporal as well as a spiritual leader. The Imam Yahya Bin Mohd Bin Hamid-Ud-din, the father of the present Ruler, was a tyrannical old autocrat, but he was an honourable man who once he had given his word would keep to his undertaking. During the 1914-18 War he had remained true to an agreement with his Turkish overlords, which had been made some years previously and by which he retained his spiritual leadership in return for relinquishing his temporal
669 authority in the Yemen. Every endeavour made by us to win
648 him over to our side was unsuccessful, and in 1918 it was not
643 the collapse of the Turkish military power which was the cause of the final and successful Zeidi revolt, but it was the expiry of the period of the Imam's agreement with his Turkish overlords. During this successful revolt the Sha'afis of the

8: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden

Yemen MLI

Yemen Relations

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Yemen gave essential aid to the Imam, without which it is 643
doubtful if he would have succeeded as quickly and as com- 648
pletely as he did. They have never ceased to regret their action. They were, under the Turks, treated with consideration, but under the Imams with oppression.

The negotiations which were commenced in 1919 were by
no means a continuous process. Sometimes they were active 721
and once, when Sir Gilbert Clayton led a mission to Sana, it 648
did look as if they would be successfully concluded, but it was 728
not to be, and by 1928 what was practically a state of open war existed between ourselves and the Yemen, when it became necessary to expel the Yemen soldiers from the Amirate of Dhala. In 1933 the Audhali Plateau still remained in Yemeni hands, and following traditional custom, the Imam had taken hostages from the people of the occupied territory and imprisoned them in the nearby Yemen town of Beidha, the headquarters of his local government. Here, heavily chained, these men and boys, among whom was the Audhali Regent's eldest son, were a living surety for the good behaviour of their relations at home.

We continued to strive to persuade, by peaceful means, the
Yemen to withdraw their forces from Protectorate territory
and to release the hostages. It was not considered to be wise 648
or politically desirable to have an open breach and to drive out the invaders and teach the Imam a lesson by force of arms which he would not easily forget, although it could have been done without difficulty. It only required air action on a very limited scale against Yemen held forts in occupied territory and the Yemen garrison towns adjacent to the frontier, to ensure a speedy Yemen withdrawal from the Protectorate and the immediate release of the hostages. In my own view such action would have had the great advantage of establishing in the mind of the Imam a respect for Great Britain which would, in fact, have accelerated the establishment of friendly relations. Unfortunately it would have meant a temporary interruption of trade with the Yemen, and the use of aircraft would have been a powerful propaganda card which I have little doubt the Italians would have played in their Red Sea-Abyssinian game.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden

Yemen ML1

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600 Sometimes I think we are inclined to pay too much heed to world opinion and not enough to the requirements of our honourable obligations, but there is no doubt that in the immediate post 1914-18 period people were even more sensitive to the use of aircraft against a primitive people than they are today, and there is little doubt that world opinion would have branded us as aggressors, the murderers of civilians and the bombers of open towns. Gross exaggeration, of course, but a fear of world opinion and, for that matter, public opinion in the United Kingdom which is often uninstructed, prevented us from taking direct action, and the long and spasmodic negotiations went on and the hostages continued to wear their chains to the shame of the protecting power. In those days it was only Lord Lamington in the House of Lords who raised his voice in a vain endeavour to make His Majesty's Government honour her treaty obligations.

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In 1933 the Imam, who was, with all his faults, a good soldier, found himself in an exceedingly difficult strategic position. Not content with the moves that he had made into the Aden Protectorate, he had been pushing out in a northerly and northeasterly direction and gradually extending his authority into the centre of Arabia. His forces, moving northward towards Najran, found their way barred by Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the great King of Saudi Arabia. At the same time the Imam was in dispute with Ibn Saud on yet another frontier in Asir. In the South the tone of our communications to him had become somewhat sterner and it looked as if our patience was nearly exhausted and the Imam had not forgotten that we had aircraft, a weapon for which he and his tribesmen had a healthy respect. The Imam was too good a soldier not to realise that he could not possibly hope to maintain his position if the patience of His Majesty's Government and King Ibn Saud was exhausted at the same time and he thereby became involved in a war on two fronts. Besides, there had recently been signs that the Sha'afis were again becoming restive in the Yemen and a severe defeat of the Imam's Zeidi soldiers abroad might well touch off a revolt.

The Imam realised that to survive he would have to make

&: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML1

some rearrangements of his ideas and come to terms with at 648
least one of his enemies. Great Britain was obviously far more 721
powerful than the Arab Bedouin King of Saudi Arabia, against 726
whom the Imam felt he had a reasonable chance of success if it came to hostilities and he was not embarrassed by ourselves. Great Britain, therefore, would have to be placated, at least temporarily, and this could only be done by his putting his claims to the Aden Protectorate into cold storage, which he proceeded to do and he approved a draft of a Treaty to be negotiated at Sana and welcomed the Mission led by Sir Bernard Reilly to conduct the negotiations, which were brought to a satisfactory conclusion in 1934. The territory of the Audhalis on the Dhahr Plateau and some villages still occupied in the Dhala Amirate were evacuated by the Yemen and the hostages were released. This was all very satisfactory, our trade had not been adversely affected and we had not been forced to fly in the face of world opinion.

War between the Yemen and Saudi Arabia followed shortly after the signature of the Treaty and the Amir Feisal, leading the Saudi Arabian troops, swept down the Tihama, the coastal plain of the Yemen on the Red Sea coast, as far as the important town of Hodeidah. There they stopped and the Zeidi soldiers who had evacuated the coastal plain and had withdrawn into the high hills, sat and watched them. The Saudis were too wise to attempt a major operation into the hills and the Imam had no intention of risking his troops in battle in the plain. The stalemate which ensued ended in a series of negotiations during which the Imam won back practically all his territorial losses.

The Treaty of Sana is a simple document of seven Articles, 648
the first of which acknowledges the independence of the King 643
of the Yemen, as the Imam was in future to be styled. The 728
second Article concerns peace and good relations and the fourth has to do with future commercial and economic agreements. Most favoured nation treatment and freedom to trade in each other's territories is the substance of the fifth Article, while the sixth and seventh refer to future agreements, present and future friendship, and lastly to ratification of the present Treaty.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden

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The difficult Article and the one about which there has been the most controversy since the Imam Yahya was murdered in 1948, is the third Article. This Article refers to the settlement of the frontier between the high contracting parties, to be precise, and it is as well to be as precise as possible in connection with this Article, the "Southern frontier of the Yemen". The first paragraph of the Article is rather involved but has not been in dispute. Briefly it defers the permanent settlement of the frontier until further negotiations have been concluded; these negotiations are to be completed during the lifetime of the Treaty which runs for forty years from the date of signature, so there are still approximately sixteen years for the negotiations to take place and the frontier problem to be settled. The second paragraph of this Article is simply worded, but it has proved to be a continual source of misunderstanding with the Government of the Yemen; the actual words, the meaning of which has been the most disputed by the Yemen, are as follows:

> "Pending the conclusion of the negotiations referred to in the preceding paragraph, the high contracting parties *agree to maintain the situation existing in regard to the frontier on the date of the signature of this Treaty*, and both high contracting parties undertake that they will prevent, by all means at their disposal, any violation by their forces of the above-mentioned frontier, and any interference by their subjects, or from their side of that frontier, with the affairs of the people inhabiting the other side of the said frontier."

I have italicised the phrase which has been the cause of most trouble. The intention of the Imam Yahya was quite clear and understandable. He wished to prevent any forward move on the part of Her Majesty's Government and at the same time defer to a later date a settlement of this tiresome frontier question without in any way modifying his own eventual claims. He succeeded, and by and large kept his side of the bargain. His son, however, the present King of the Yemen, is a man of a very different stamp, although as courageous as his father he is not nearly so honourable; in fact he is completely

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden
Yemen ML 1

untrustworthy and since he succeeded to the throne almost 648
every Article of the Treaty has been broken and breached time 643
and time again. I do not suggest that during the period from 728
1934 to 1948 there were no differences of opinion with the old Imam, because there certainly were, or that the Treaty was kept scrupulously because it was not, but he was a man with whom business could be done, and however serious the frontier incidents might be, and sometimes they were very serious indeed, ultimately agreement was reached and the situation was in general restored.

In 1948 the Imam Yahya was ageing rapidly; he was over 643
eighty years old and beginning to fail physically, though mentally his faculties were still unimpaired, and there was little doubt that his reign was drawing to a close. In the opinion of many of his subjects he had reigned for far too long, but they were to regret deeply the manner of his passing and the change
which it brought about. Outwardly the Yemen was calm and 668
undisturbed, but in the East outward appearances can be very deceptive and especially in the case of a country like the Yemen where suspicion can be certainty, and trial is considered a waste of time. A fifth columnist is a fifth columnist for just so long as no-one knows that he is; when they do he is no longer of any political importance because he is just a dead man. Beneath
the surface the country was in a turmoil. The Imam's rule had 688
been despotic since the Turkish yoke had been thrown off 643.
thirty years before, and the Sha'afi elements of the population after years of oppression had practically reached that point where they were prepared to take any risk rather than continue to submit to further oppression. The Imam, like most Eastern despots, had made no decision with regard to his successor, or if he had, no-one knew except himself. The best of his sons had died years before off Hodeidah, drowned while trying to save his servant who had fallen into the sea and could not swim, and of the seven or eight sons who remained the succession seemed to lie between Ahmad, the eldest, who for
some time had been Governor of Taiz, and Hassan the next 643
brother whose influence lay in the northern part of the King- 674
dom. In primitive places in the East patricide was not an

2. Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMl Aden
Yemen ML1

643 [674] abnormal method of accession and the Yemen was still very primitive, and the Imam, wise man that he was, had no intention of making known any views that he might have on the succession. It was far better that the brothers should remain in doubt and keep an eye on each other.

668 643 662 It was not only the Sha'afi elements in the population, whose aid had been essential to Yahya when he broke away from the Turks, who were becoming more and more restive as the reign continued, but some of the Zeidis themselves were disgruntled. The Al Wazir family, a collateral line of considerable importance of the Ruling house, had come down in the world. At one period of history the Imamate had been confined to their branch of the family and always had they held high office in the State, but recently it seemed that others were to be more favoured and they did not look forward with any pleasure to serving either Ahmad or Hassan. In fact, they shared the majority view that the Hamid-Ud-din branch of the family had been in power long enough, and their dissatisfaction was known to the leaders of the Free Yemen movement, as the progressive Sha'afi party was called, and secret approaches made to Abdullah Al Wazir, the head of that branch of the family, had been received not unfavourably.

662 668 It may seem curious that the Sha'afis could bring themselves to intrigue with, and in fact to combine with, any of the Zeidis however opposed to the Hamid-Ud-din dynasty they might have been, but they had no alternative. The Free Yemen leaders knew very well that they could not hope to prevail over the Zeidis without assistance either from outside or from inside the Kingdom. They did not really care where the help came from, Egypt, Saudi Arabia or Aden, but Egypt and Saudi Arabia were kingdoms, and kings do not view with any marked degree or favour the deposition of other kings—it creates a dangerous precedent. Aden looked attractive, but unfortunately was under the British, a people whose reactions could never be predicted with any accuracy. At one moment they would think nothing of tearing up 600 treaties or agreements in what had been India, leaving the Princes, the loyalist of their supporters and "faithful friends" to make what arrange-

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML I

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ments they could with a Congress and a Muslim League who held all the trumps, and the next they would be deeply shocked at any suggestion that they should disregard a treaty with an old rascal who had, until recently, been a bitter enemy and even now could scarcely be described as a friend. To continue to submit to the Hamid-Ud-din family was out of the question and therefore the Sha'afi's only hope was to set Zeidi against Zeidi. Anything was better than continuing as they were and then finding the harsh Ahmad, a man of no humanity and little of his father's somewhat primitive sense of justice, or in the alternative the strictly puritan Hassan, a Zeidi of the Zeidis, in control of their destiny. It was really a policy of despair, and the only comfort was that not by any stretch of the imagination could the Al Wazirs be worse than the Hamid-Ud-dins.

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By the early spring of 1948 the conspiracy had reached a point where a decision had to be made, whether to wait for the old Imam to die in the fullness of time and take advantage of the disturbed conditions which his death was bound to create even though a successor had been named, or whether to anticipate the inevitable and accelerate the Imam's departure for the next world while Ahmad and Hassan were keeping a jealous eye on him and on each other. This latter course was chosen and the old aristocrat was murdered one afternoon as he drove back to his capital Sana from his country house a few miles away in the Wadi Dhahr, where it was his custom to go from time to time for a few days' peace and quietness. As might have been expected, he died gallantly trying to shield his small grandson, who was with him in the carriage and who died with him. When the bodies were recovered the old King was seen to have stretched his arm in protection over the body of the young boy. The deed was done within sight of Sana where, so it is said, Abdullah Al Wazir watched from the roof of his house through binoculars so that he could take action directly the assassins had done their work. The revolution began from the moment the murder was committed, and by the very act of its inception was doomed to failure.

The murder of the Imam, their spiritual leader, horrified alike the Zeidis who were loyal to the Hamid-Ud-din dynasty

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML 1

643 and those who had pledged their support throughout to
669 Abdullah Al Wazir. The brothers Ahmad and Hassan put aside
662 their personal jealousy, came to an agreement of necessity with regard to the succession, which was to go to Ahmad first and after him to Hassan, and combined to avenge their father and secure the throne.

Ahmad was at Taiz when the revolution broke out, but he escaped and after a most difficult journey, during which he showed great personal courage, he arrived at the fortress of Hajja, later to be the scene of the execution by his orders of several of his brothers. The loyal Zeidis flocked to Ahmad's standard, while up in the north Hassan, who had taken refuge in tribal territory where his influence was paramount, made his plans to recapture Sana. Aided by his half-brother Abbas, a lover of strong waters, but a soldier, who was himself to be one of those to suffer death at Hajja seven years later for his part in the 1955 revolt against Ahmad, he raised a formidable tribal force and then moved south towards the capital.

In the meantime the conspirators were partially successful and Abdullah was duly proclaimed as Imam in Sana, but he had made a second stupid and almost equally disastrous mistake. He failed to take measures in time to secure the immense treasure of the Imam Yahya and it fell into the hands of Hassan, with the consequence that Abdullah was very quickly short of money—fatal to a revolutionary when his enemies are well provided. Another blow came when King Ibn Saud, shocked by the manner of Yahya's death, refused to recognise the new regime and thus quenched all hope of military and financial assistance from Saudi Arabia. These setbacks, following quickly one upon the other, put an end to Abdullah's hope of success, but he put up a stout fight and it was some weeks before the end came and Hassan and Abbas recaptured Sana and his brief reign came to an end. He was executed, together with many of his relatives and followers. It was a barbarous business. Ahmad was never nice in his conduct of these affairs.

643 On Ahmad's succession to the Imamic throne execution and
[687] imprisonment was the order of the day in the south, while
Hassan in the north showed a disconcerting reluctance to wel-

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden

Yemen ML1

come his brother. Hundreds of refugees fled to Aden or sought [illegible]
asylum in the Protectorate and became a problem, because it 167
was clearly undesirable for them to remain in British territory 648
where they would certainly conspire against the new Imam, and it was impossible for them to be handed over to certain death without trial when Ahmad, who was busily engaged in purging the Yemen of the Al Wazirs and the Free Yemenis who had not succeeded in escaping, demanded, as he was certain to do, their extradition. So the leading refugees in the Protectorate territory and in the Colony were advised by the Aden Government to continue their travels and they went to Pakistan and to Egypt and waited. Most of them are still waiting.

It was a sad day for Anglo-Yemen relations when Ahmad 643
came to his father's throne. Harsher than his father, with little 648
of the old man's political wisdom, his long residence in the south of the Yemen in close contact with the Protectorate and the Colony had made him jealous of their progress and determined to revive his country's territorial claims as soon as possible. Unfortunately relations were not improved by the fact that Ahmad was convinced that Aden had aided and abetted the murderers of his father. He judged all men by himself, and if he had been Governor of Aden he would not have hesitated to take every possible advantage of the revolt. But curiously enough, although he more than suspected the Aden Authorities, I do not think he ever believed that His Majesty's Government had any hand in the business. This seeming inconsistency is understandable only when it is realised that never, even to this day, has the present Imam believed that the policy of Aden's Governor is identical with the policy of or has the full approval of the British Government. He believed then, as he does now, that the Governor of Aden is a law unto himself and was responsible for his own policy, which might or might not be approved by the powers that be in London.

The change in our relations was not immediate because in 643
the early months of his reign Ahmad was preoccupied with 648
the internal affairs of his kingdom, but as he succeeded in consolidating 721
his own position at home so was he able to turn his

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden

Yemen ML1

643 648 721 attention to the furtherance of his ambitions abroad and gradually relations became more and more strained and frontier incidents increased, until in 1949 a Yemeni intrusion at Nejd Markhad in the Amirate of Beihan, the northern most State of the Protectorate, was repulsed by us with commendable 648 728 determination. The firm attitude which we adopted on that occasion seriously alarmed Ahmad—bullies always are when someone shows fight—and the result was a Conference in London between representatives of the British Government and representatives of the Yemen. The object of the Conference was, generally speaking, to improve Anglo-Yemen relations and more particularly to try to settle or find a way of settling some of the more recent frontier disputes.

The Delegates conferred and went on conferring and the Yemen representatives argued backwards and forwards as only Arabs can when they have no case. Time and time again agreement seemed to have been achieved and the British Representatives at the Conference table went home after a long hard day quite certain that the next morning would see the end of the whole tedious business, but not a bit of it; the following day found that the Yemenis had no recollection of any measure of agreement having been achieved the previous evening and insisted on beginning all over again. However, all things have their end, even a conference with the Yemen, and in 1951 a written Agreement came into being, the result of all the hours, days and weeks of talking. Briefly this document provided for the interchange of diplomatic representatives, the evacuation, pending a final decision on the boundary of the Sharif of Beihan's post at Nejd Markhad, and the setting up of a Boundary Commission to examine the specific frontier disputes which had been the subject of discussion at the Conference, with the object of determining what changes, if any, from the 1934 *status quo* line had taken place in the alignment of the frontier. If any deviations from the 1934 line had occurred then they were to be rectified and the old frontier line re-established.

Here was cause for satisfaction and optimism among those happy people in our Government circles, and the cloistered

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden
Yemen ML1

corridors of the Colonial Office, who were inexperienced in 648
the ways of the Yemen. We look upon an Agreement as an 728
obligation to be honoured in the letter and the spirit, however disagreeable it may be, but not so the Government of the Yemen. The Imam Ahmad believed—and he and he alone was and is the Yemen Government—that an Agreement must be honoured scrupulously in so far only as it was to his advantage and could be forgotten, disregarded or deliberately misunderstood or even misinterpreted when it was to his disadvantage.

The practical results of the 1951 Agreement, this *modus* 64-8
vivendi Agreement as it became to be called, were that the Yemen set up a Legation all complete with a fully fledged Minister in London without more ado and we opened a Legation in Taiz which had become in fact the new capital of the Yemen since Hassan's reluctance to welcome his brother in Sana, with a junior official of the Foreign Service as Chargé d'Affaires. We have never yet appointed a Minister; the post at Nejd Markhad is still unoccupied, no Boundary Commission has been set up and probably never will be. The fundamental change resulting from the signature of this Agreement was that diplomatic relations with the Yemen were no longer channelled through Aden, but through our diplomatic representative in Taiz.

The setting up of a Legation in the Yemen is slightly more difficult than carrying out the same procedure in London. In London all that the Minister has to do is to interview a reliable house agent and hire a suitable house or flat in a suitable quarter of the capital, call on the Foreign Secretary, present his Letters of Credence to the Monarch and establish social and official intercourse with his brother diplomats. Once he has done this he can dodge in and out of the Foreign Office at any time and is bound to be received, at least outwardly, with every sign of respect and courtesy. In the Yemen it was not quite so easy, as our first Chargé d'Affaires was to discover, and the first difficulty arose over the site of the Legation: the Imam had not really finally decided which of the two towns of Taiz and Sana would, in fact, be the capital. In spite of his brother's

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML1

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reluctance to welcome him in Sana it was theoretically the capital, and the Yemen Government which was situated in Taiz announced that all diplomatic missions must be established in Sana. The Egyptian Minister had taken up his residence there on appointment in the "Rest House" where he duly flew his flag, but he found life difficult because although Hassan, who had become titular Prime Minister lived there, both the Foreign Minister and the Imam were still in Taiz and showed no firm intention of moving. It is quite true that the Foreign Minister and his so-called Foreign Office were on the telephone line from Sana, but, like everything else in the Yemen, the telegraph functioned at the whim of the Imam and was frequently out of order. It was impossible to tell whether these breakdowns were accidental or intentional. Protocol required the head of the Foreign Mission to deal with the Foreign Minister who, in fact, was virtually inaccessible and while it was true that the Prime Minister was on the spot and in an emergency protocol might be suspended temporarily, it was also an undeniable fact that he could not answer any question or representation without first of all communicating with his brother Ahmad, the Imam, in Taiz. The Egyptian gave up the struggle and went away leaving a clerk in charge of his few files.

Well aware of the disadvantages of being in Sana and strongly suspecting the Imam's intention to isolate our diplomatic representative in the north, where he would have no chance of being effective, we insisted on the British Legation being established within reach of the Yemen Foreign Ministry, and we won the encounter and established our Legation in Taiz, only a short distance from the Foreign Ministry building. Even so, life has not been without its problems for our Chargé d'Affaires whose contacts with the local people have been severely limited, and who himself was not received by the Imam until 1954 when I myself went to Taiz to negotiate with the Foreign Minister in the hope of improving relations between the two countries. After innumerable delays a reasonable Legation building has been constructed and at the time I left Aden the Chargé d'Affaires was able to have frequent con-

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tact with the Foreign Ministry and was not subject to quite so much surveillance as he had been in the beginning, but he was still not permitted by the Yemen Government to fly, in accordance with International practice, the flag of the country he represented on his official motor-car when travelling in the Yemen.

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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

PART II

CHAPTER SIX

Security, Colony and Protectorate

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THE first duty of all Governors and Administrators is to maintain security in the area under their authority, and in order to enable them to carry out this primary function they are provided with security forces which may take the form of police, armed or unarmed, and troops, regular or irregular, and even aircraft. In Aden when I became Governor there were two separate security problems, the first of which was the maintenance of law and order in the Colony itself, and the second was the maintenance of security in the more settled areas of the Protectorate, while at the same time increasing the sphere in which our security measures were effective until the whole of the Protectorate territory had achieved a degree of security which would enable development both political and economic to take place.

In the Colony there were available to me, as Governor, Civil Police in adequate numbers, a small detachment of Armed Police, and under the command of the Air Officer Commanding, a reserve of British troops in the form of a detachment of the Royal Air Force Regiment. In addition, there were also the Aden Protectorate Levies for use during a period of disturbance to guard key points, in particular in the neighbourhood of the Khormaksar military installations.

In the Protectorate there were various forces and formations available and at my own and the Rulers' disposal; in addition there were aircraft of the Royal Air Force operating from the Colony and also from landing grounds in the Protectorate. Later I will describe the employment of the Protectorate

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security forces in further detail, but for the moment I want to confine my attention to security in the Colony.

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The Colony, to all outward appearances, and they can be very deceptive, always seemed to be one of the most peaceful places on earth where nothing was ever likely to happen, but in fact it only required a minor incident at the wrong time to cause really serious trouble and to do so not within a matter of days, but almost of minutes. The reason, of course, is not far to seek; it is that there are in the Colony three races who have no special love for each other. The Jews are disliked and despised by the Arabs whom they fear, while the Arabs in their turn dislike the Somalis who are, at the best of times, a truculent lot. Therefore, we were always liable to have trouble between the Arabs and the Jews which might well spread to the Hindu community, or between the Somalis and the Arabs, or between all three, and in no time, much to the surprise very often of successive Air Officers Commanding, the summer skies had clouded over and we were having a devil of a storm, which with firm measures would pass as quickly as it began. A stranger would be astonished to learn on his arrival in tranquil Aden that inter-racial disturbances had resulted in one or two deaths only two or three days before.

I do not want to give the impression that Aden is particularly prone to disorder, and that civil disturbances are the rule rather than the exception because this would be a false picture. What I mean is that, on the rare occasions when there is trouble, it comes with incredible swiftness, due to the latent racial animosities that are always present.

To give an instance of my first experience of the speed of events when inter-racial trouble started in the Colony, I must go back to 1931, when there occurred the first anti-Jewish riot. At that time there were some 6,000 Jews living in Aden, most of them in Crater in their own quarter close by the Boys' Secondary School. Some of them were very wealthy and most of them were in business either as shopkeepers or merchants or petty traders, and generally speaking, they kept very much to themselves, were self-effacing and their contacts with the Arabs were reasonably good. From time to time,

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however, the younger elements of the Jewish community became a little swollen headed and were inclined to be somewhat truculent and walk three abreast down the pavement, forcing everyone else into the street, and when this began to happen experience showed that there was quite likely to be trouble. The Arabs consider that the Jews are their social inferiors and provided they keep their place, or what the Arabs consider to be their place, there is no trouble at all and the two communities may live side by side in peace for years; but as soon as the Jews tended to forget that they were Jews and began to assert themselves as men, then there was always a likelihood of serious trouble.

One afternoon, the Resident, as the Governor was called in those days, went to Crater to present prizes at the Boys' Secondary School and I, as his Personal Assistant, went with him. We left the Secondary School building about 7 p.m., and drove back to the Residency and when we did so the streets in Crater were just as they usually are, and as we passed by the Jewish quarter there was no sign of any excitement whatsoever. Some twenty minutes later we arrived back at the Residency and I hurried off to change as there was to be a dinner party that evening and it was my duty to meet the guests on their arrival. I was having my bath when the telephone rang in my office next door, and draping a towel round my waist I hurried into the office and picked up the instrument.

"Menahem Messa speaking. I must speak to the Resident at once," said a voice.

Now, Selim Menahem Messa was the most important member of the Jewish community and a man of very considerable wealth indeed.

"I am afraid, Mr. Menahem Messa, that the Resident is busy at the moment, but I can give him a message if you like," I answered.

"Yes, tell him that we must have help at once, tell him that we are all being killed," said the voice.

"Who is being killed?" I asked.

"The Jews. The Arabs are killing us. We must have help."

I was, of course, astonished, as we had only just come back from very peaceful Crater and I assumed that I had to deal with a lunatic who must be humoured, or with some attempt at a practical joke.

"All right," I said, "I shall see the Resident in a few minutes and then I will let him know what you have said."

I then went back to my bath and had scarcely finished it and was putting on my trousers when the Office Orderly came in and said that the Sergeant of the Residency Guard wished to see me: the Sergeant reported that two Jews, who seemed to be very excited, had arrived in a car and demanded to see the Resident. The Sergeant wanted to know what he was to do, so I told him to bring them to my office at once. I had scarcely completed dressing before the Sergeant was back again with a couple of white-faced Jews who started speaking as soon as they saw me. They demanded to see the Resident; they said the Jews were being murdered; they said the Authorities were doing nothing and that the police would not help, and so on and so forth. When eventually I did succeed in stopping the spate of words, I rang up the Commissioner of Police only to be told that he had gone to the Crater Police Station. This was the second shock I had that evening, because it certainly looked as if something unusual was happening in Crater if the Commissioner of Police had gone there when he should have been having his dinner. I rang up the Crater Police Station and the telephone Orderly confirmed that the Commissioner had been there, but that he and the Inspector had gone off to the Jewish quarter where a disturbance had been reported between the Arabs and Jews. He did not ease my mind at all when he said that the Armed Police had been called out, but I confess I still found it extremely hard to believe that there was anything approaching a major disturbance because everything had been so peaceful and so ordinary when we ourselves had been in Crater little more than half an hour earlier.

However, I left instructions with the Crater Police Station for the Commissioner to ring up the Residency as soon as he returned, and leaving the Jews in my office with the Sergeant of the Guard, I went into the Residency, to the Resident's

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bedroom where he was changing for dinner. I told him what had happened, and as soon as he was dressed he came with me to my office where he listened to what the Jews had to say, pacified them and sent them away; he then asked me to go as quickly as possible to the Crater police station.

The street outside the Secondary School was full of people, but just beyond the school and between the school and the Police Station, which was about 200 yards away, it was empty because the houses along one side of the street were occupied by Jews who seemed to have become hysterical and were on their roof-tops throwing stones indiscriminately at anyone passing in the street below. I left the car at the school— it was too big a target—and ran across no-man's land, arriving at the Police Station without misadventure, where I found that the commissioner had just arrived. He was cool and collected as he always was in a crisis, but he was quite unable to say what was the cause of the riot. All that he knew then was that it started just after the Resident and I had left the Secondary School, when the congregation of a Mosque on the outskirts of the Jewish quarter had, in the middle of evening prayer, become highly excited and rushed out and started to try and break into the Jewish houses nearby, the while vowing vengeance on the inhabitants. The police had acted promptly and no serious damage had been done, but the wildest rumours were flying about and crowds of Arabs were collecting in the streets. The Jews, as usual, had lost their nerve and barricaded themselves inside their houses and started throwing anything that came to their hands from their windows and their roofs at all and sundry in the streets below. The Commissioner, who had called out his Armed Police and posted guards on Menahem Messa's house—he was known to have a very large sum of silver coin on the premises—felt that he could control the situation and did not at that time want any military assistance. He promised to report in an hour's time, or sooner, should the situation deteriorate, and I hurried off back to the Residency to let the Resident know what I had discovered.

The next morning the situation was still tense, and although there had been no further outbreaks of violence, it was decided

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to send the armoured cars to Crater and to relieve some of the police who had behaved splendidly throughout, to give them a much-needed rest by detailing soldiers to carry out their duties temporarily.

Meanwhile in the Residency office at Tawahi we were having a rather tiresome time because the most extraordinary telegrams were coming in from London calling for reports, asking how many Jews had been killed and showing clearly that the powers that be had got the impression that the slaughter was wholesale. They had to be answered, and were, but what was to us more important was to find out who was sending false reports to London, and for this purpose censorship was imposed on all telegrams being sent from Aden which had any reference to the riot.

The night passed without incident and the next morning the Resident went to Crater and called personally on Menahem Messa. He found everything was quiet and though alarmed, Menahem Messa was quite satisfied with the arrangements which had been made by the authorities to ensure the safety of the Jews. When he returned I showed him a telegram which had just been sent to me by the Eastern Telegraph Company under the censorship regulations. It was addressed to a Jewish organisation in London; it referred to a pogrom of the Jews and complained that the authorities refused to take adequate measures to protect the Jews. It had, in fact, been sent from Menahem Messa's house while the Resident was actually in the house talking to Menahem Messa. It must be recorded though, in fairness to Menahem Messa, that he himself knew nothing about it and was in no way responsible.

During this riot no one was killed and only one person was seriously injured and that was a Somali milkman, who, for some unknown reason, was stabbed; and there were not in fact very many minor injuries during the whole course of the ruction.

Later we discovered that the immediate cause of the riot was a parcel of filth which had been thrown out of a Jewish window in the direction of the night soil passage alongside the house, but it had missed its mark and landed in the middle

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of the Mosque at prayer time. This is just an example of a careless incident which can start trouble in Aden.

Another example of inter-racial tension, and one which did not end so happily, came about in 1947 when events in Palestine, and the foolish behaviour locally of people who should have known better, put a match to the sensitive tinder that is Aden. The result was horrible because of the appalling speed with which order dissolved into chaos, and murder and pillage came to the normally law-abiding town. It was a lesson which I, for one, was to heed in the years to come.

Events outstripped the precautions taken, and the police were unable to control the situation, with the result that the Civil Authority had to abdicate temporarily and control passed to the Military, and the Air Officer Commanding called upon the Aden Protectorate Levies to restore order. They were tried beyond their breaking point and they proved at that time to be unreliable in an inter-racial dispute involving their co-religionists and the hated Jews. To resolve the situation troops had to be brought in by air and Naval ratings landed from hastily summoned warships; order was restored speedily, but not before many people had died and much of Crater in and around the Jewish quarter had become a blackened ruin of buildings.

Compensation was paid to the worse sufferers, Jew and Gentile alike, by the Government of Aden, and loans were granted, many of which have still to be repaid in spite of the solemn undertakings and promises given and entered into by the Jews. There was, of course, an inquiry into the disturbances, and the need to maintain in Aden a detachment of British troops for Internal Security purposes was recognised. So does good come from evil.

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The Jews, many of whom had that inborn longing for the promised land which is a characteristic of their race, fled to Palestine in ever-increasing numbers, until a few years later there were scarcely 700 Jews left in Aden. The Jewish community had ceased to be a factor in the affairs of the Colony.

The erstwhile Muslim leaders, frightened and sobered by what they had failed to prevent, tried to prove that the damage

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579 had been done by the foreign elements in the population and
blamed the Yemen labourers in the harbour, the cargo and
the coal coolies, but they knew full well that the Yemenis had
not been responsible for starting the trouble and had not been
167 alone in the pillaging and fire-raising. However, this hare
648 was duly hunted, and the control of landward immigration
became a disturbing major problem and many and curious
were the proposals and plans that were considered. A great
fence was to be built round the landward side of the Colony,
twenty to thirty miles in length at a cost which no-one troubled
to discover; the Colony was to be cut in half by another fence
across the Isthmus, turning Khormaksar and Sheikh Othman
into a vast squatter camp of undesirables who could not gain
entrance into the Fortress Area; watch towers with searchlights
were to be constructed and supplemented by police
motor patrols; the population was to be registered and the
coolie lines moved from the vulnerable Steamer Point area,
all complete with the coal wharves that they served and which
were such an eyesore, across the harbour to the northern side.
Gradually a more balanced view prevailed and only the last
[656] proposals became actualities. The population has been registered
[657] and the coolies have been moved, not across the harbour,
but from their disgraceful overcrowded dormitories to
modern comfortable lines at Ma'alla; and the coal wharves
are under construction, but whether there will be any coal to
put on them when they are finished is quite a different matter.
Every year less and less coal is imported into Aden, for ships
bunkers, and very shortly the coaling ship will be almost
unique.

563 I do not propose at this juncture to refer to the breaches of
579 the peace which occurred during the labour disturbances in
1955 when the Police Force behaved so admirably—that will
come later—but I am going to relate two more examples of
the speed with which events in the internal security field can
move in Aden.

Less than two months after I became Governor I flew to Mukeiras for a few days. The day after my arrival I heard and saw an aeroplane circling round the landing ground, and

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something seemed to tell me that it was a bad omen; so I packed a bag quickly (my servants had gone to the local village not expecting that they would be required) and hurried across to the landing ground, arriving there just after the plane touched down. It was the acting Chief Secretary, with news of trouble: a Jewish girl had declared that she had become a Muslim and had left her mother's house and gone to the home of the father of the young Muslim she proposed to marry. The girl's mother had applied to the Court, and as the girl was a minor, the Judge of the Supreme Court had issued an order that she was to be restored to her mother's custody. It was scarcely necessary for the acting Chief Secretary to tell me that there was considerable excitement in the town. It was only to be expected, and I recalled the trouble that had arisen recently over a very similar situation in another Colony. I had no option but to return immediately, which I did, and on arrival in Aden I sent for the Air Officer Commanding and for the Attorney-General and the Commissioner of Police; and then asked the Judge of the Supreme Court to call and inform us what action he had taken. What he had done was perfectly clear, and although from an administrative point of view exasperating in the extreme, was legally correct and unavoidable, and it was difficult to see how he could have done anything else. What we had got to do was just as exasperating, but equally clear, and that was to see that the order of the Court was carried out and that the girl was restored to her mother's house.

The Commissioner of Police left us in no doubt about the feeling in the Colony and what would result when the girl, now a Muslim, was taken by force; she would not go willingly to her mother's house—the house of a Jewess—and he informed us of the arrangements he proposed to make if he had to carry out the order of the Court which he said quite frankly he hoped would not be necessary in view of the tense situation in the Colony. I made it quite clear to him that the Court's order must be carried out, but that I was prepared to delay its execution for forty-eight hours—sufficient time for such precautions as would have to be made to deal with any disturbance,

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and time for me to try and settle the matter by personal negotiation with the leaders of the two communities. The Air Officer Commanding was perfectly agreeable to my request for British troops to be moved to Crater immediately before the Commissioner of Police carried out the order of the Court, and he co-operated in every way, but he did ask whether it was advisable to bring the military into it before it appeared to be absolutely necessary. I told him that in my experience, whenever there was a serious civil disturbance, or the likelihood that there would be one, the Governor would certainly be blamed whatever action he took, and that that was the only certainty there ever was in these affairs. If adequate measures were taken and in consequence there was no disturbance, then I should be accused of being over-cautious and worse. On the other hand, if adequate measures were not taken and there was a riot and there were casualties, then I should be accused, and rightly, of having failed to take adequate measures to ensure the maintenance of law and order. As I was going to be blamed whatever happened I would rather be blamed for being too careful than for not having been careful enough. The Air Officer Commanding on this occasion, as on every occasion when I had to call upon him, gave me his wholehearted support, and if we had had trouble, there would have been no doubt about the co-operation between the Civil and Military Authorities.

Immediately my conference was over I sent for the leader of the Jewish community and the Pakistani Muslim contractor to whose house the girl had gone. The Muslim contractor was only too willing to do everything he could, and the Jew, after he had blamed everyone, except the girl and his own community for what had occurred, also expressed his willingness to try and solve the problem, and at my request they met together and later in the morning they came to see me and suggested that the girl, should she refuse to return home, should go to the house of a European doctor who lived outside the town and remain with his wife for the time being until the excitement had died down. Unfortunately, the girl's mother, who was a widow, would not agree to this procedure and insisted on the girl being returned to her house. At her request

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I saw the old lady that evening, and I can well understand why her daughter decided to leave home. She did not hesitate to tell me what she thought of me and everybody else and to bang my desk with her clenched fist until the pens and pencils flew all over the place; the Commissioner of Police jumped to his feet thinking that she would have to be restrained physically. She calmed down eventually and was taken away, but not before I had explained to her that her daughter, who was eighteen years old, would be returned to her house, but that she was not entitled to keep her in the house by force, and if she could not persuade her to stay, then the girl was entitled to leave again, and if she did leave she would be taken by the Commissioner of Police to the European doctor's house whose wife was willing and ready to receive her. It was at this interview that I discovered that the girl was, in fact, the Jewish leader's sister-in-law.

After much coming and going by everyone concerned, and many who were not, all through the morning and afternoon of Friday as tension mounted, the girl's fears were overcome and she agreed to go and see her mother. Late on Friday night she was taken in a closed car from the contractor's house to her mother's house. The old lady soundly upbraided her daughter in the presence of the Commissioner of Police and the doctor's wife, whereupon the girl refused to remain at home, and being free to depart she was taken at once to the doctor's house. Technically the Order of the Court had been executed, or so the Attorney-General assured me, and for some strange reason everyone was quite satisfied. The excitement died down immediately; the troops did not have to be moved to Crater, and a week later, without the slightest objection from the Jewish community or from anyone else, the girl ran away from the doctor's house back to that of the Muslim contractor and was married to his son. Very extraordinary!

Three years later I was at a cabaret entertainment at one of the larger cinemas which was owned by the aforesaid contractor. The entertainment was in aid of some charity, precisely which charity I have forgotten, but I have not forgotten that at half-time the Proprietor came to my table and whispered

563 579 in my ear that his son's wife would like to see me. So I rose and went through the back of the hall into a private house, and for the first time I met the Jewish girl who had been such an infernal nuisance three years earlier. She and her husband seemed extremely happy.

563 829 As I have already indicated, *it was not only strained relations* between Arabs and Jews which might lead to serious disturbances in the Colony, but also the ill-feeling which existed between the Arabs and the Somalis. The Arabs disliked the Somalis, partly because of their truculent behaviour which they found difficult to tolerate from people who were darker in colour than themselves and whom they considered to be an inferior race, and partly because Somalis flocked over from their country to Aden in search of work which the local Arabs held, with a considerable degree of truth, to be their own prerogative.

563 464 An example of Arab-Somali tension occurred in the spring of 1954, but on this occasion the trouble was over at Bureikha where the Aden Refinery had recently come "on stream". When the Refinery Management were considering various solutions to their labour recruiting problem they had been warned that they were inviting trouble if they employed too many Somalis in work which could be done by local or Protectorate Arabs. The advice had been accepted, but it had not been followed as strictly as it should have been, with the result that there was a considerable Somali labour force at the Refinery.

563 579 It was my custom in the winter months to go out very early on Sunday morning along the Khormaksar Beach to Abiyan, either with a friend or by myself, except for my faithful personal guards, there to shoot duck, or possibly a goose, or both if I was really lucky, and this custom was well-known to the Chief Secretary. Occasionally I would go out the evening before and stay the night and although normally I always let the Chief Secretary know when I expected to be absent from the Colony for a night, I sometimes forgot to do so. It was not altogether surprising, therefore, when one Saturday night at about ten o'clock he rang up Government House and, getting no reply, thought it was because I was away, and assumed that

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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I had gone shooting. In fact the A.D.C. and I had gone to bed very early and the orderly who should have been on duty at the telephone had either gone to sleep himself or gone in search of a cup of tea. The next morning when my early tea was brought at about six o'clock—(early rising was another, to my subordinates, objectionable habit of mine)—the servant who brought it asked me how the trouble at the Refinery was getting on. I asked him what he was talking about and he said:

"Oh, a riot started over at Bureikha last night and the troops have been called out."

I at once rang up the Chief Secretary and was not surprised when, even at that early hour, he answered the telephone immediately. I asked him what was happening, and when he had overcome his astonishment at finding that I was in Government House, he explained that late on Saturday afternoon an Arab watchman on the Refinery premises had arrested a Somali, or vice-versa—I forget precisely which it was—for loitering in a suspicious manner. Immediately there ran round the Arab and Somali coolie lines the most exaggerated rumours about the Somali or Arab having been brutally treated, and before very long the Somalis and the Arabs were at each other's throats. Police precautions were taken and everything was well in hand until the situation had deteriorated rapidly at about half-past nine at night, and the Commissioner of Police had felt it desirable to ask for military support. It was then that I had been called on the telephone by the Chief Secretary, because it is the Governor in person who should ask the Air Officer Commanding for military assistance. Not having received any reply, and assuming, as he did, that I was away, the Chief Secretary had then rung up the Air Officer Commanding himself and explained the situation whereupon, quite rightly, the Air Officer Commanding had despatched troops across to Bureikha.

I asked what the situation was and the Chief Secretary told me that he had no first-hand information as he had been unable to get through to the Commissioner of Police or to the Refinery Office. I, myself, rang up the Refinery and was lucky to find someone had just come into the office who told me

563 579 that although there had been a lull in the rioting during the night, it had again broken out and the Commissioner of Police and the Officer commanding the troops had gone off to deal with the new trouble.

I was not satisfied, and I determined to drive myself over to Bureikha at once and see precisely what was happening. I also decided that I would take the Audhali Sultan, who was on a visit to Aden, over with me because some four or five hundred of his tribesmen were employed in the Refinery, and his presence would certainly have a calming effect on them, and probably on the other Arabs as well. I telephoned him at his lodgings in Crater and found he was only too willing to help in any way. So, arranging to meet him *en route*, I dressed hastily and telephoned the Air Officer Commanding to let him know what I was going to do

I met the Audhali Sultan near Ma'alla, and in about half an hour we reached the Refinery coolie lines to find that about ten minutes before our arrival the rioting had stopped. It had stopped when a police officer, quite rightly, shot an Arab rioter who was about to undo a gateway which would have let a considerable number of furious Arabs into an area where there were only a few Somalis, who would undoubtedly have suffered severely, if they had not actually been killed.

I think on the whole that the Sultan and I did a certain amount of good in as much as we were able to walk round among the Arab rioters, or those who had been rioting, and advise them clearly and sternly to stop making a nuisance of themselves. The Somalis, who were outnumbered by the Arabs, had completely lost their heads and were behaving in a very provocative manner without giving thought to the consequences, were reassured by our presence, and by the time we left had begun to calm down. After having spoken to as many people as was possible and conferred with the Commissioner of Police and his officers and men, all of whom had acted in an exemplary manner, and also said a few words to the Officer commanding the troops who, I am glad to say, had not actually had to open fire, I went over to the Refinery hospital where the wounded, who were mostly Somalis, 563 579 were being taken care of. I walked round and talked to them; there, also, I saw the Arab who had been shot, and learned that there was a reasonable chance that he would not succumb to his wound. This relieved my mind, because although sharp lessons are necessary when people behave as these people had, and when the occasion arises the police must do their duty even to the extreme length of opening fire on a crowd, one has in one's heart sympathy for the foolish and hates to see them suffer too much for their faults.

By the time the Sultan and I had finished our tour as it were, things were in much better shape, thanks to the efficiency of the police and the prompt action of the Police Officer who had fired and by so doing had brought a number of the rioters to their senses.

Two days later, except for stones and dustbin lids, which had been used by the Somalis as shields, lying about, there was practically no sign of the riot, and everybody appeared to be working together perfectly amicably.

The incidents which I have related above will give some idea of the speed with which the normal tranquillity of the Colony can be disturbed and a state of affairs come about which may require, not only police action of the most extreme nature, but also intervention by the military forces.

701 The stationing of a detachment of the Royal Air Force Regiment was, as I have said, a direct development of the 1947 Arab-Jewish riots and the Commission of Inquiry into the riots which was held in January 1948 and which advocated the presence of British troops in the Colony for internal security purposes. They certainly have my deepest gratitude for their wise decision, but I would not like it to be thought for one moment that the Aden Protectorate Levies will never be fit to undertake Internal Security duties—far from it—even in the few years which lapsed between the riots and my return from Aden there has been considerable improvement in discipline, and although I consider that in fairness to all races the presence of British troops is still essential, there is no doubt that in time the Levies will be capable of undertaking any duty they may be required to perform. It is, like everything else, only a

701 question of sound and inspired leadership and the discipline which flows from such leadership.

626 Security in the Protectorate was a very much wider problem than in the Colony and there were more diverse forces at my disposal to ensure a reasonable degree of protection and to punish those who wilfully created disturbances. Prior to 1937 no-one had paid very much attention to the Protectorate, and His Majesty's Government certainly had not attempted to honour their obligations. I doubt if they were really fully aware of what those obligations were to the people of this great territory. Beyond ensuring, in so far as was possible, that the trade routes remained open so that the trade of the Colony was not impaired by the wild and woolly ruffians in the hills behind, very little was done, and what was done was generally by the old-fashioned method of placating unruly and tiresome individuals with rifles and ammunition and money.

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631 After 1937 there was a profound change in policy and the emphasis was then on reducing the number of lethal weapons in private possession and building up the authority of the Treaty Chiefs by providing them with the means to maintain security in their own States. His Majesty's Government had come to a better understanding of their obligations and realised that the first essential to any form of progress must be security. The Rulers were encouraged, therefore, to form their own armed police forces, and they received assistance in arming, clothing and paying for these forces.

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701 By the time I became Governor there had come into being in each State a body of men who were known as Tribal Guards and who were at the Ruler's disposal to maintain his authority and for use in any sudden security emergency. Starting as a completely untrained force they had gradually been brought up to a standard of efficiency and effectiveness which was a credit to the instructors who had been made available from the Government Guards. On ceremonial occasions they were very smart indeed, dressed in khaki shirts and khaki kilts with red cloth head-dresses, but in an emergency they left these trappings at home and there was nothing outwardly to distinguish [714]

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them from their fellow tribesmen, except their superior armament and well filled cartridge belts.

The Tribal Guards are the first line of offence and defence of the Ruler and in only two of the States is there any more elaborate organisation. Lahej has a private army which was, when I was in Aden, a sorry collection of ragamuffins, some 200 strong, whose pipe Band was much in demand on St. Andrew's night at the Union Club, that centre of European civilisation and culture in the Colony; otherwise, I am afraid this force had but little merit. The Quaiti Sultan has, at Mukalla, a Regular Army and the headquarters of his Armed Constabulary which, thanks very largely to the inspiration of Mr. W. H. Ingrams, C.M.G., O.B.E., who as Resident Adviser did so much for that country, were reasonably efficient. In appearance there is little to choose between the Regular Army and the Armed Constabulary, except that the former was considerably darker in hue, having been recruited largely from the Sultan's ex-slaves.

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Some years before an interesting conversation had taken place between the Quaiti Sultan and a Political Officer in Mukalla, at a time when Aden was threatened with a visit from one of the more rabid anti-slavery enthusiasts.

"Don't you think it would be a good idea, your Highness, if you were to release your slaves?" inquired the Political Officer, referring to the Palace slaves who numbered some 300 men and youths without taking into account their women folk. The Political Officer had led up to this question with a dissertation on the rights of man and world public opinion, and he had produced all the usual anti-slavery arguments with considerable eloquence, and he awaited the answer to his question with some anxiety. The Authorities in Aden, threatened by the advent of the enthusiast, were seriously worried about the slaves of Mukalla. Although, in fact, they were a lot of lazy well-fed good-for-nothings, there was no doubt that in theory they were slaves, and enthusiasts can never see out of both eyes at the same time.

"It is a very good idea," replied His Highness, "but I can release them only on one condition."

2: Hickinbotham ~~G-4,~~ 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

567 "What is the condition?" asked the Political Officer with considerable misgiving.

"You must agree to send troops here when I free them," answered the Sultan.

"What for?" asked the astonished Political Officer.

"To protect me, of course," said the Sultan.

"I am afraid I do not understand, your Highness," said the Political Officer much perplexed.

"I am surprised. Surely it's obvious? I feed and house and clothe my so-called slaves, and of course, their families. I give them presents on religious festivals and when they marry. I have not enough work for them to do and in consequence they have an easy life. Now, if I say to them that they are free and I don't propose to keep them any longer and that they must go away and earn their own living, I am afraid they won't be very pleased. They are simple people, you know, and prefer actual ease and comfort with only technical restraint to freedom and hard work, and as they are stronger than my army I must be certain of your help before I make them free," was the answer of the Sultan.

567 As usual with us a compromise was achieved and the slaves
702 became the troops.

The backing for the Tribal Guards in the Western Protector-
701 ate comes from a body of men called the Government Guards,
625 a fine lot who were originally raised and trained by Lord Belhaven and Stenton, when as Master of Belhaven he was a Political Officer working in the Protectorate. Indeed, it was his idea which brought them into being and the Protectorate should be extremely grateful to him for his happy thought and his hard work in the early formative months. They are under the general direction of the British Agent, who is the senior Political official responsible to the Governor for the Western half of the Protectorate, and are a Government force paid for from the annual subvention from Her Majesty's
[714] Government. Well armed and well trained with distinctive black head-dresses, they play many dangerous and difficult parts. Led by their British and Arab officers they are always ready to support the Tribal Guards when local difficulties

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prove too great for them to overcome alone, and to find escorts for Political Officers in troublesome areas. The forts on the Aden-Yemen frontier and in the less secure regions in the Protectorate are garrisoned by them. Always ready to move, always ready to fight and always cheerful, their early history can be read in Lord Belhaven's autobiography, *The Uneven Road*, which nobody can read without intense enjoyment. Many of the guards have died or been grievously wounded in doing their duty; and although they are soldiers of the Queen, very few people outside their own country have ever even heard of their existence.

In the Eastern Protectorate the equivalent of the Government Guards is the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion, the men of which are in every way their equal and whose role is precisely the same and which came into existence through the foresight of Ingrams. They are a tough and courageous body of men who carry out their desert patrols on the borders of the Ruba-al-Khali with a fine disregard for climatic conditions or personal safety.

The third and last line of locally recruited troops are the Aden Protectorate Levies who were raised shortly after the Great War of 1914–18, strangely enough as the First Yemen Infantry by Lt.-Colonel M. C. Lake, C.M.G. Recruited from the same source as the Government Guards they are regular soldiers and were, during the time that I was Governor of Aden, officered by officers of the Royal Air Force Regiment on secondment, although the change to include the Army in the source from which officers could be obtained and which has now come about, was at that time under consideration. In normal times the Levies are stationed within the Colony limits and are moved by air or by lorry to help the Government Guards whenever the need arises. In the early days of my term of office they travelled in great long lorry convoys, very vulnerable and painfully slow, but later, I am glad to say, there were drastic and necessary changes and the emphasis was put on the air as a medium of transport.

In theory the Levies are available for use in the Eastern as

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625 well as the Western Protectorate, but in practice they have been far too busy in recent years dealing with Yemeni-inspired raiding and other disturbances in the Western Protectorate and only once in their history have they been employed in the Hadhramaut. The Levies have had heavy responsibilities and very hard has been their lot and very scanty the praise that those brave men have received. Shortly before my term of office expired a detachment of regular troops from the Army was stationed in Aden, to my great satisfaction. They were invaluable.

712 So far I have dealt solely with the Land Forces, but with only
648 a few thousand men, possibly 4,000 in all, however well
707 trained and however well armed and led, it would be virtually impossible to safeguard a frontier line of over 700 miles in length running through the most difficult country from aggression, and at the same time to maintain any reasonable degree of security in an area where social conditions today are equivalent to those existing in the Highlands of Scotland in the mid-eighteenth century, and which is twenty-five per cent. larger than the United Kingdom. That the frontier has been maintained and that security has increased of recent years is due very largely to the Royal Air Force, acting in the closest accord with the ground forces. Without the Royal Air Force my task would indeed have been difficult; I will go further and say quite frankly it would have been impossible.

000 As Governor I frequently had to authorise the use of air action against frontier raiders or recalcitrant tribesmen within Protectorate limits, and I have never been able to follow the almost hysterical reaction with which some sections of the population of these islands are affected whenever they read in the newspapers that bombing has taken place, or indeed that any form of air action has been used. It is for this reason that I shall deal at some length with that most humane of all the various methods by which law and order can be maintained by force, the employment of aircraft.

I do not propose to enter the lists on the side of those who favour this form of policing, nor do I propose to side with the many people who have genuine misgivings, but I am going to state the facts and leave the conclusions to be drawn by others. 000

Let us take frontier control first. The Suzerain power must carry out her obligations to the Rulers and peoples over whom she exercises authority, and the primary obligation is to protect them and their territories from external aggression. This is 648 especially so when the nature of the agreements between the paramount power and the subordinate Rulers is specifically protective, as is the case with the primary treaties between Her Majesty's Government and the Aden Protectorate States. Of this there can be no shadow of doubt. A further obligation 000 is one that all paramount powers have in regard to the neighbours of the States they protect, and that is to ensure as far as possible that the boot is not on the other foot. In other words, to ensure that the subordinate States do not violate the frontiers of neighbouring foreign States with whom their Suzerain is in friendly treaty relation.

The first essential in all frontier control is information. Information of troop and tribal concentrations and the movements of motor and other forms of transport, unusual movements that is, and of any suspicious changes from the normal, such as, for instance, in Arabia, the sudden movement of camel herds from their normal grazing grounds or the presence of tribesmen in normally unfrequented areas. Information to be of real value must be accurate and also it must be speedy and come before the event to which it relates. It is no good being told precisely what happened after the affray or the incursion has occurred. The Authorities must know what is probably going to happen so that action can be taken to prevent completely, or at least to reduce, the magnitude of a border incident. Border posts equipped with W.T. sets are essential and so are Intelligence Agents, but when the frontier is some 700 miles in length and runs through precipitous mountain areas and waterless, sandy and stony wastes, it is impossible to provide and garrison enough of the first and supply enough of the second for them alone to be really effective. Both Agents and Post Commanders base their information on travellers' tales and hearsay, unless of course the Post is itself attacked, and

000 normally time is required to assess the value of such evidence before action can be taken to deal with the situation. To rely solely on Agents and Post Commanders for information would result in many false alarms with consequent waste of time and would fatigue unnecessarily the military forces charged with the task of frontier control.

648 The ideal is a combination of air and land, and that is pre-
701 cisely how watch along the Aden frontier is maintained. The
203 frontier Posts are sited in strategic positions and are provided
707 with W.T. sets, but owing to the nature of the ground they
are often many miles apart, especially on the Aden-Saudi frontier where their number is strictly conditioned by their accessibility to adequate supplies of water. Information comes in from the Posts either from the Political Officer for the area who may be there at the time, or from the local Commander of the Post, and it is checked forthwith by a reconnaissance flight by the Royal Air Force when it relates to troop movements or tribal concentration. It is often only a matter of an hour or so from the time that the information is received to the time that the pilot's report confirming or disproving the information is available. In times of particular tension reporting from Posts is supplemented by frontier patrols, by aircraft flying along the Aden side of the frontier. These patrols have proved to be particularly effective over the sandy and stony desert across which runs the Aden-Saudi Arabian frontier; camels and vehicles can be hidden in Wadis and can travel at night, but neither camels nor vehicles can pass over open country, especially sandy country, without leaving tracks for the airmen to see in the morning.

Speedy and accurate information from the desert areas and from the mountainous regions would be impossible without the use of aircraft. In both types of country the air-land form of frontier control and reconnaissance has been proved to be not only the most efficient, but also by far the most economical both in men and machines, and in money also. It is not inhuman and [illegible]not unsporting. True, the Yemen, in my time, had no Air Force and Saudi Arabia nothing much in that line, but the object is to prevent frontier violation not only by our

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neighbours, but also by our own people, in which we are doing our neighbours a service.

Much has been said and written in the Press about frontier violation by reconnaissance aircraft operating from Aden. Ninety-nine times out of a hundred such reports are without foundation. It is impossible for any but the most skilled trained observer on the ground to predict precisely, without the aid of precision instruments, where an aircraft is flying in relation to the ground, especially if it is at any height. Errors do occur from time to time, but they are few and far between and are generally errors of navigation committed by navigators inexperienced in the conditions prevailing in the Aden Protectorate.

The next essential, after information of an incursion has been received and confirmed, is action. The intruder must be evicted—that is an immediate necessity. If you catch a stranger in your house in the middle of the night packing up the spoons, you try to arrest him and to kick him out. You are quite entitled to do so. If he seems to be too much for you to tackle alone you call the Police and they take on the task. If the intruder shows fight and a disinclination to leave, the Police use "reasonable force" and take the fellow away. He may get hurt in the process; that's just too bad. No one writes to the papers and asks questions in the House of Commons, but transfer the scene to a Colony, multiply the intruder by one hundred, substitute a desire to burn and pillage for a liking for other people's spoons and an aeroplane for the police, and there are long articles in the Press and shoals of questions asked in the House of Commons.

Many people feel quite genuinely unhappy about the use of aircraft against ground forces, which is understandable, but springs from ignorance of the way in which aircraft are used. War and fighting with lethal weapons of the modern sort is beastly and horrible to a degree, and the longer it goes on, the more are the casualties and the more horrible it becomes. Therefore, surely the most humane thing to do is to stop the fighting as soon as possible with the fewest possible casualties, especially among our own troops, or to prevent it altogether.

703 The way to do this is to use the Air Arm as much as possible.
The Arabs are a proud race and rate personal bravery highly,
as highly as they do prestige, and frankly, that is far too high.
They will not give in to an inferior force, but will shoot it out
to the end. They are unlikely to give in to a slightly superior
force, but they will give in to an overwhelming force and often
be secretly glad to do so.

648 I found when using the Government Guards or the Aden
726 Protectorate Levies to deal with petty malefactors that
703 if I sent a small but adequate force there was invariably
a fight, but if I sent far more men than were necessary
the malefactors' pride was saved and there was no blood
shed.

648 An example of air-land co-operation based on actual fact
726 involves an aeroplane and two patrol cars. The aircraft was
703 on frontier reconnaissance patrol; the pilot spotted a lorry
travelling southwards inside the Protectorate border in a
706 prohibited zone. This was up on the Saudi Arabia-Aden fron-
707 tier. He circled and at the same time wirelessed to the nearest
frontier Post for patrol cars. The lorry was halted by a burst
of fire well in front. A message was dropped and the lorry was
ordered to remain stationary and wait for the patrol cars. It
did so. The aircraft guided the cars to the lorry. It was loaded
with rifles for distribution in the Protectorate and carried a
number of well-armed tribesmen. There was no fight; the
aircraft was the overwhelming force. The tribesmen were disarmed and the lorry was taken to the nearest Hadhrami Bedouin
Legion Post. If the aircraft had not been used on patrol, the
lorry would not have been spotted, and if the aircraft had not
been there when the patrol cars arrived, there would have
been a very unpleasant scene indeed. The tribesmen would
certainly not have given in without a fight and lost the rifles,
each one of which was worth locally one hundred pounds
sterling.

648 In action against raiders from across the frontier in hilly
country, aircraft are not nearly so lethal as many think because
726 the lightly armed raiding tribesman has so much cover at
707 his disposal. In fact they are very hard indeed to hit at all.

Casualties in these conditions are few as between the aeroplane 648 and the enemy, but the aeroplane has a very considerable 726 moral effect on our own troops as well as on the enemy. 707 Ground-air co-operation can work wonders in bringing matters to a speedy conclusion by the denial of commanding features to the raiders and by giving covering support to advancing ground troops, and casualties among our own men are reduced to a minimum.

Aircraft operating alone cannot hold territory, nor can they in difficult country deny ground to the enemy indefinitely. I am writing of course of Colonial conditions and not of the use of thousands of aircraft in concentrated bombing operations as was the practice in Europe towards the end of the last war. What aircraft can do is to transport troops quickly and support those troops once they are in action, and that is the way they have been used in the Aden Protectorate. In this way lives are saved on *both* sides and, incidentally, it is in the long run the most economical method as well as the most efficient for watch and ward on a frontier in the conditions prevailing in the Aden Protectorate.

Now let us consider the role of the Air Arm in Internal Security work, and in particular the vexed question of bombing. Breaches of the peace in the Protectorate can be due to a 721 number of causes and take various different forms. Sometimes there may be a genuine misunderstanding and a grudge or grievance nursed until it explodes into murder; sometimes a constitutional dislike, not unknown in the West, of paying taxes, takes the form of armed resistance to authority, the authority of the tribal Ruler; and sometimes a breach of the peace is the direct result of bribery, by a so-called friendly power, to murder, pillage and burn and disrupt security so that the economic, political and social development of the country is retarded. This last form of evil doing has been more prevalent in recent years. Uneducated people are easily misled by ready talkers, and rifles and money mean much to the wild tribesmen, especially when distributed with a generous hand. They little realise the harm they are doing themselves by burning schools and dispensaries. They are to be pitied as well as

721 punished. But it matters little what the cause of the crime, it is the method of punishment which is under examination. Let us, therefore, trace a normal sequence of events.

The incident has occurred, and the guilty party has been determined without doubt by the Political Authorities. Their Ruler asks Government to aid him in bringing them to account if it is beyond his power to act alone. The offenders are called upon to surrender themselves and explain their conduct. They do not appear on the date stated and no excuse is offered. The Ruler orders them to pay a fine in rifles or in money or in both. The fine is always well within the means of the guilty party to pay and is never vindictive. Payment is not made so the transgressors are warned that action will be taken to destroy their property, generally tribal towers, to the extent of the fine. Care is taken to make sure that the leader's property is first on the list for attention, and great care is taken to ensure
721 that excessive damage is not done. Aerial photographs are
726 taken and the actual towers or houses carefully identified.
707 Twenty-four hours' notice of air action is then given and the
648 transgressors are warned to remove their belongings. If at any time before the expiry of the warning period the persons concerned submit or make any move indicative of their willingness to submit, the whole operation is postponed immediately. If no move has been made by the guilty party then a further warning of one hour is given immediately
[202] prior to the air action. The first warning is dropped by air on the village or towers of the offenders, and to ensure that there is no mistake it is sent also by hand through neutral agents, probably Saiyids, but the second warning is from the air alone. The operation takes place and the bombing or rocketing of the buildings is very accurate and no unnecessary damage is caused. Quite often the offenders and their friends gather on a nearby hill feature to watch the aircraft in action. The incident is over. The slate has been wiped clean. There have been no casualties, there were not intended to be; only material damage has been done.

I do not recall that during the time I was closely connected with the Protectorate there were, at any time, any casualties as a result of such operations. To have inflicted the same punishment in the more remote areas of the Protectorate, with land forces, would certainly have resulted in casualties on both sides, and would have been a long and laborious operation. Justice in the wilder and less civilised areas of the world, where memories are short, must not only be seen to be done, but it must be swift. Air action fulfils both these requirements, and is at the same time the most humane method. It seldom leaves any lasting feeling of resentment and more often than not normal relations have been resumed with the offenders in a few months or even weeks.

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Sometimes air action cannot solve the Internal Security problem quite so readily and this is when the recalcitrants have no permanent dwellings, but live in grass huts or caves or just under trees in close proximity to the frontier. When they have been tempted and have fallen and have committed some gross offence then action has to be taken by air against their flocks, the only property they have, and when this fails action is taken to deny to them their grazing areas. Sometimes even this does not produce the required result, which is to persuade them to make submission and live in peace with their neighbours. Then ground and air action is taken to round up the men or to destroy them if they resist; the normal procedure when dealing with dangerous armed criminals in any part of the world. This may take long to achieve when the frontier is near and supplies of foodstuffs and money and shelter and compensation for damage done are all readily available from outside the Protectorate. The main fault is not with these poor, foolish, misled creatures, but with those responsible for leading them astray. They are the people who most deserve punishment and not their unfortunate dupes; but the principals are far away and out of reach in a "friendly" country. The loyal and staunch tribesmen, our friends, know where the fault really lies. We may understand why the punishment cannot fall where the result would be immediately successful in stopping at once the bribery and corruption which is the root of the matter, but they who depend on us and are loyal to us and who suffer from the depredations of the disrupters of the

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peace have not our understanding of the world-wide considerations which influence our policy. They cannot understand our reluctance to take action, and I confess that on occasions I have been just as mystified.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1
Yemen ML 1

CHAPTER SEVEN

Travels in the Protectorate

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DURING my period of office as Governor from 1951 to 1956 our policy in the Protectorate continued to be that of developing as much as possible, with the limited resources of men and money at our disposal, the economic, the political and the social life of the Protectorate. As I have already indicated, in all forms of development the first essential is to improve security, because no progress is possible unless peaceful conditions can be attained and maintained. Initially before the full force of Yemen reaction was felt, our progress was rapid and areas in the Western Protectorate which had been riven by feuds and in which every man's hand had been raised for generations against his neighbour, were pacified. Unfortunately this progress could not be maintained and eventually much of the effort which should have been directed to pacifying the still unsettled areas, had to be diverted to maintaining the ground gained and to dealing with disturbances on the Aden-Yemen frontier.

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Yemen reaction to the work which we were doing in the Protectorate was not due directly to the Federation policy which was announced in January 1953, and about which I shall have more to say later, though there is no doubt that that announcement stimulated the Yemen Government to greater efforts than they had made before to disrupt the political stability of the Protectorate. Ever since the present Imam had decided to bring out of cold storage the Yemen claim to the Protectorate, tension had been increasing. He viewed with disfavour, tinged with fear, our successful efforts to advance the well-being of the States, partly because he foresaw that the

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643 more civilised the people became the more difficult would it be for him at some future date to impose his will upon them, and partly because he feared the reaction of the Sha'afi majority in the Yemen to the improvements which were manifest in the Protectorate and which contrasted sharply with conditions in their own country.

There was nothing new in the methods that the Imam used to interrupt progress in the Protectorate, which varied from promoting frontier raids and hiring assassins to formal protests to our diplomatic representative at Taiz, or directly through his Minister to the Foreign Office in London, claiming, as he did, that every new school and every new road which was opened in the Protectorate was a breach of what had come to be known as the *status quo* Article of the Treaty of 1934. You see, although the old Imam most certainly understood clearly that Article 3 of the Treaty of 1934 referred solely to the frontier position, his son chose to interpret the Article as referring to the whole of the Protectorate, thus to his understanding the *status quo* included any form of change, such as the Federation proposals as a major example, to the opening of a new school or dispensary as a minor example. He protested and protested, but these protests were the least of the troubles that this tiresome fellow contrived to create. In spite, however, of all his efforts progress did not come to an end and it continued, even when the rich diet of slander provided by the Egyptian radio propaganda caused some slight biliousness in the more settled and prosperous areas bordering on the Colony.

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177 The Imam Ahmad was not the only critic of our Protectorate policy. There were others nearer home who, like all critics, became most vociferous when things were going badly. There were some who said that too much was being attempted, and others that too little was being done, and in the Protectorate itself there were a number of people who had misgivings every time there was a set-back, but fortunately the majority of the Rulers and their people realised that the task which had been undertaken could not be accomplished by a gentle stroll up the hill of progress. It was going to be a stiff, hard climb with very nearly as many downs as ups, but what mattered was not the

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incident of travel but the overall progress that was made and 178
that was, all things considered, reasonably satisfactory. 177

Progress throughout the area would have been more speedy 000
and more spectacular if it had been possible to observe the old proverb in our dealings with some of the Rulers that "to spare the rod is to spoil the child". Children some of them were, and Teddy Boys were not lacking among their subjects, and while I agree that it is better whenever possible to lead children, there are times when even the most amiable child must be coerced in its own interest, and I have never faltered in my opinion that an ash plant, properly applied, is one of the few things that is effective in dealing with young thugs in this or any other country.

I think I can best give a general idea of the people of the Protectorate by describing briefly some of the journeys which I made to some of the States, and some of the people I met. These journeys are typical of what, during my term of office, were certainly monthly occurrences and for periods at a time were a weekly event. No one can hope to govern successfully unless he knows the people, and what is more important, they know him, so that whenever time allowed I toured formally and informally every part of the Protectorate, except Upper Yafa, to which neither I nor the Imam could gain access.

DHALA

Shortly after I became Governor I decided to pay another 648
visit to the Amirate of Dhala, and one morning I drove myself 643
in my Land-Rover, accompanied by a few Government Guards, across the desert to Lahej and on through the Haushabi country up into the foothills of the Amirate. Just below the final ascent up to the Dhala tableland I was met by the Naib, or Deputy Ruler. He was not a very exciting-looking person, being under middle height, very thin and having some congenital infirmity which caused him to drag one foot, but however unprepossessing his outward appearance, there was no doubt about his stoutness of heart or his loyalty, and his ability to ride up and down the hills of his homeland was quite

648 astonishing. He was certainly not an indifferent shot with a rifle
643 and surprised Bill Goode on one occasion by shooting a chikor
(hill partridge) with a ·303 Lee-Enfield rifle when the bird was
800 actually in flight. He was acting for his uncle, the old Amir
Nasser, who, since the murderous attack at Christmas time in
1950 on Major Basil Seager, C.M.G., O.B.E., at that time
British Agent for the Western Protectorate, was living in
retirement at Lahej.

Once we had got up the rather difficult final pass on to the plateau the last few miles of the drive through the low hills were quite delightful. The air was cool and the country green, and the Naib's Tribal Guards and tribesmen on the hilltops guarding our passage and firing shots of welcome in the air as we drove past were a romantic and picturesque sight.

361 We went straight to the Political Officer's house a mile or so
712 from the old grey town of Dhala, which looked as sinister as
ever as it straggled up the hillside to the ancient castle on the summit. There I met the notables and tribal leaders who had gathered in strength, while the guns of the castle slowly—oh, so slowly—fired a seventeen-gun salute. The guns were very old, and it was more dangerous to be behind them than in front of them. They had a tendency to explode if too much black powder was used in the charge, and there had been a nasty accident some few months earlier at the time of the Idd celebrations which had reduced the number of guns and gunners available for ceremonial purposes.

648 After the tribesmen and the notables had taken their departure, the Naib and I, with the Political Officer, went into the latter's office and talked about local affairs. Among other things the Naib deplored the kindness shown by the Imam to the Amir Haidera, his cousin and the son of the old Amir Nasser, who had been a power in the land until his conduct had become quite outrageous and a climax had been reached when he seized the Treasury and revolted against his father. We took action to bring him to reason, but he fled across the frontier and found refuge in the Yemen town of Qataba, from which place he never ceased to intrigue in the Amirate. Just before sunset the Naib said farewell and went off across the plain to his house just

outside the town, and as darkness fell the guns of the fort 648
ceased to boom their still unfinished salute.

The next day the Political Officer took me to see the place 000
where Seager had been attacked as he, all unsuspecting, walked with his wife, a brave lady who did her best to beat off her husband's assailants until the Government Guard escort could come up. They had been told by Seager to follow some little distance behind so that he and his wife could enjoy their stroll in private. There I found a small heap of stones marking the spot and I had them scattered because there was no point in perpetuating the memory of a shameful incident. Seager had, I am glad to say, recovered, and the would-be assassins had been punished, that is, those who had not fled to the security of the Yemen. As far as I was concerned the chapter was closed.

There was time to spare before we were due to lunch with the Naib, so I formed my escort into a line of beaters and for an hour or so we wandered over the slopes of the nearby hills and found some hares among the scrub. Then back across the plateau to Dhala and up to the castle where I had first stayed twenty years before.

The Naib met us at the entrance and after I had inspected the Guard of Tribal Guards I was ushered into a long narrow room where some of the guests had already assembled. We shook hands and took our seats on the floor around the walls. I was seated at one end on the right of the Naib and on his left was the Political Officer, and as more and more guests entered they gave the customary salutation and we rose and I shook hands with them and they took their places round the walls. The guests were a curious collection, most of those present being tribal leaders and notables from the area, but there were others from neighbouring districts and, of course, the soldiers
of my escort and my own personal servants. The people of 146
Dhala have one serious vice and that is that they grow and eat 184
Qāt, which absorbs a great deal of their vitality and practically 147
all their money; in consequence, they are physically well below the ordinary standard of the Protectorate, and in appearance I think they are best described by the American adjective
"mean". Personally, I have always liked the country better 000

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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A TRIBAL GUARDSMAN

[facing p. 114]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

000 than the majority of the inhabitants, although I have a high regard for the Ruler himself.

123 As we sat and waited for lunch to appear there was a general
264 hum of conversation, but it was with some relief that eventually we saw more active preparations for the coming meal, as the servants came in and laid strips of cotton cloth on the floor down the centre of the room to do duty for a table. Then a living chain was formed between the dining-room and the kitchen, and with incredible speed dishes of rice and of curry and of fruit, and piles of flat round cakes of bread, came up the chain and down on to the table, until the cloth itself was almost invisible and there was a hot heavy smell of spices and meat, which in that densely-crowded room was rather overpowering. The dishes came to an end and there was one of those irritating and unnecessary pauses, common to the East on these occasions, while we sat waiting for the signal to begin with well-bred concealment of our impatience. We were hungry, but it would have been the worst of bad manners to show that we were in any way interested in what had been set before us until our host had invited us to begin.

Everybody had ceased to speak and most people were assessing the possibilities of the meal in a silence of expectancy. The Naib looked towards the door through which the food had been brought, waiting for an indication from his head servant that the last dish had been set in place. The servant appeared and nodded his head and the Naib glanced at me and said "Bismillah", which means "In the name of God", the polite invitation to begin. We all shuffled forward the few inches which separated us from the food and with many muttered "Bismillahs" started to pick delicately at what was nearest to us, thus showing our good manners.

000 It was at this moment, while the silence was profound and everybody's attention was occupied with the food, that it happened. There was a shattering explosion, and the pungent smell of gunpowder filled the room. The whole building shook as the ground trembled and plaster fell from the ceiling on to the food. The whole assembly, with the exception of three, came rapidly to their feet and looked wildly round while

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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SIDDIQ AL HASSANI OF THE GOVERNMENT GUARDS, LEADER OF MY SIX PERSONAL GUARDS

[facing p. 115]

daggers were drawn, and I saw one of my personal servants 600
with commendable presence of mind seize and draw the dagger from his neighbour's belt, thereby providing himself with a weapon and disarming a potential enemy in one swift movement. The three exceptions were the Naib, the Political Officer and myself, and to this day why we remained unmoved I really do not know, because normally speaking the noise and surprise of the explosion would have made me jump out of my skin. Possibly I had some subconscious realisation of the cause of the disturbance.

The Naib looked at the startled company and spoke:

"The cannon," he said, and smiled.

Calm succeeded panic as realisation came to one and all that it was no Arabian adaptation of the Guy Fawkes incident, but only the indomitable gunners in the battery outside the window, who, with commendable tenacity, were determined to finish my seventeen-gun salute.

Reassured, the guests all sat down again and daggers were returned to their scabbards, and in some cases to their owners, and the meal was resumed with more zeal and less trifling than there had been before the rude interruption. Reserve was gone and there was a degree of friendliness unusual on such occasions in Dhala where most people always seemed to be slightly suspicious of their neighbours. I begged the Naib to issue an order to the gunners to cease firing the salute, and he did so and there was no further incident.

It was some time before I was to visit Dhala again and it 64-3
was then to be present when the family council selected a new Amir to replace old Nasser who had died in Lahej. All the States follow much the same system when deciding on a new Ruler. The senior members of the deceased's family, who are the senior members of the ruling sept of the clan or tribe, meet together and agree on their choice. He may be a brother, or a son, or indeed a cousin of the dead Ruler—there is no fixed rule. Once the family council have made their decision, then the tribal leaders are called together and asked to endorse the choice. When they have done so the new Ruler entertains everyone to a meal and the ceremony is over. There are, of

643 course, exceptions and in Lahej, for example, the electoral college is composed not only of the heads of the branches of the Ruling family, but also of the Sheikhs of the principal tribes and the senior Qadhi, but generally speaking it is the family who make the choice for tribal approval.

In Dhala on this occasion the new Amir was selected after a bitter disagreement between two of his uncles, and an attempt on the part of the family council to avoid having to make a decision by asking for direct British administration. The troublesome uncle, having failed to ensure that a large proportion of the State revenue would in future be devoted solely to the support of himself and his family, abstained from voting in the council meeting and fled that same night to the Yemen with his close relations, and was warmly welcomed there. The new Amir was very upset at what he considered to be a serious affront to his dignity, but, personally, I had no doubt that he was well rid of a particularly useless and disagreeable bunch of Qāt-ridden wasters.

AULAKIS

636 In the winter of 1951–52, the Aulaki adventure was making
131 good progress. The Aulakis are a virile and warlike clan whose
184 territory runs north and south along the western side of the administrative dividing line between the western and eastern sections of the Protectorate and are themselves divided into three States, the Lower Aulaki Sultanate in the south on the sea coast, then the Sheikhdom, an area of fierce barren hills with steep and narrow valleys, and in the north the more open table-lands of the Upper Aulaki Sultanate.

636 At this point a word of explanation is necessary about the administrative dividing line to which I have referred. This line came into being purely as an administrative convenience and should, in fact, never have been incorporated on the maps of the area because the Aden Protectorate is one indivisible whole. The reason why any administrative line became necessary was that at the period of history when it was first drawn in pencil on an old map, probably by the Governor, the British

Agent in the west of the Protectorate was a person of very 636
determined character who reacted strongly to any encroachment of what he considered to be his kingdom, while the distinguished administrator at that time in the Hadhramaut was equally strong minded and had acquisitive tendencies; so in order to prevent a major war between these two distinguished officers a line had to be drawn, and they had to be instructed to keep inside their boundaries.

Many years ago the Aulaki had burst out of their hilly fastnesses 175
and spread east and west through the length and breadth 636
of the Protectorate, until their influence ran right up to the 184
Yemen borders and they held even Lahej to ransom, while away in the east the Quaiti Sultanate suffered from their depredations. In the earliest days of South-west Arabia before the Christian era, it is probable that the Aulakis were the most powerful race that that country had ever produced, but like many other great nations they gradually declined in influence and authority until today they have little but their barren hills and their pride, the latter bolstered up by nebulous claims to tribute from their neighbours, which they can no longer
enforce. Their pride was their greatest asset and at the same [181]
time their worst enemy: in their powerful and prosperous days it had driven them forward and in the days of their weakness it had torn them apart until the great Aulaki Confederation had dissolved into a maze of blood feuds which had laid waste the land upon which they had come to depend, and thereby impoverished the people.

The old Sheikh who ruled the Sheikhdom had come into 643
treaty relation with us in 1904 and he was still alive, but he 636
was too old to manage the affairs of his country, and his youngest son Abdullah had been chosen as Regent to rule in his name. Abdullah was a pleasant person with none of the strong characteristics of his brothers and he had been selected by the family council and the tribal leaders for that very reason. His eldest brother was too die-hard to be acceptable to the family or the tribes; the bedouin brother was not interested, and his stout brother preferred to be the power behind the
throne rather than the occupant of the throne itself. The 600

643 636 628 The brothers all expected to be able to guide Abdullah in what they considered to be the right direction, and in consequence Abdullah was often the recipient of contrary advice and in a dilemma, but there was one thing about which he had no doubt and that was his dislike of the interminable blood feuds. He sought our help to put an end to them and at the same time to set up an administration. His request was granted and a motorable track was driven through the mountains to Yeshbum and Said, the two towns of the Sheikhdom, opening up the country to the outside world. Truces were made between the tribal septs which were guaranteed by Abdullah as Regent for his father and by Government, and in a short while peace came to a land which for so long had known nothing but strife.

636 628 The negotiating of the truces was, in this case, not particularly difficult because everyone was tired of fighting and only too anxious to come to an agreement, provided they could do so with honour. The authority of the Sheikh, backed by the power of the Government, was an overwhelming reason for suspending the feuds, and what was essential, a reason that could be seen by their neighbours and would be generally acknowledged as adequate. It is not only in Surbiton that the opinion of the neighbours is of importance.

Such truces are normally made for a few months in the first instance and then renewed for longer and longer periods until no-one troubles to remember when they lapse. When this stage is reached it does not matter whether they are in force or not because the reason for the truce has been forgotten and peace and good relations have become the accustomed way of life. Sometimes feuds are ended definitely during a truce by the casting up of the accounts of the dead and wounded on either side during the period of the feud and the striking of a balance; the difference being assessed at so much a head in accordance with local custom and a payment of "blood money", as it is called, being made from the debtors' side to the creditors' side.

636 648. Strenuous efforts were made to produce an administration and eventually one began to take shape, but it was painfully slow and the whole project very nearly had to be abandoned. The real trouble here was lack of money. It generally is. Money

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was required not only to produce the buildings to house the administrative staff and to pay for the staff and to build roads and open schools and increase the number of dispensaries, but also to provide a stipend for the Ruler and to placate tiresome relatives and soothe, temporarily, until the administration had gained strength, troublesome tribesmen who looked with some suspicion on the innovation and had a constitutional antipathy to the payment of taxes and attendance in court. There had been too little money for too long, but in the end the need, the essential need, for financial assistance was accepted by Her Majesty's Government and this embryonic administration, together with others in the Protectorate in like circumstances, received an annual grant which was just sufficient to enable the administrative machines to run without undue friction and to grow stronger.

To anyone who does not know the circumstances of the case it must seem short-sighted that no adequate provision was made, adequate financial provision, for this project before it was undertaken. In fact, as in every project, however small, estimates were prepared but unfortunately they proved, as they so often do these days, to be inadequate. Somebody obviously was seriously at fault and to a degree I suppose the blame should lie with myself, but some share of the blame can reasonably be transferred to London. The Treasury are the custodians of the United Kingdom's money, money which has been contributed through the Inland Revenue and other channels to finance the United Kingdom and, incidentally, the poorer Colonial territories. On the whole, they carry out their duty very well, but so tight on the purse strings have their fingers become that in some Colonial territories they have induced what I can only describe as a Treasury complex. The yard-stick against which demands and requests for funds have come to be measured in many Colonies is not the essential minimum financial requirement, but what it is thought that the Treasury can be persuaded to give. Two very different matters.

Fear that the cost, the full cost, of a scheme essential to the welfare of the Colony, if disclosed, will mean the immediate and total rejection of the scheme has induced more than one

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648 administrator to understate the true requirement, more by wishful thinking than deliberately. The result is that too little is asked for, less is provided by the Treasury and the consequent mess costs much more to clear up than would have been the case if an adequate sum had been demanded and granted in the beginning. Sometimes I fear it is forgotten in the United Kingdom that there are able and honest people outside the corridors of Whitehall, who have the interests of the Nation at heart. More trust abroad would mean less frustration and loss of confidence and would not cost any more, in fact, there would be a saving.

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646 To return to the Aulakis. When I visited the Sheikhdom for the first time I drove up from Aden through Dathina with its funny republican experiment, where the three major tribes had stopped killing each other and were trying to run their own affairs by means of an unwieldy council with a revolving President, who held office for one year. The Sheikh of each tribe in turn became the President of the Council and a harassed Political Officer was endeavouring, with not a very great degree of success, to keep the Council on the rails and to prevent the members from too much feathering of their own nests. It was obvious that there would have to be a return to a more practical, if less liberal form of Government in the near future.

000 The Political Officer for the Aulaki area drove the Land-Rover so that I had ample time to see the country through which we were passing. As we went eastward I was particularly interested to see how the new security was bringing people back to the long untilled lands. Fields were being cultivated and houses rebuilt. There were flocks on the hillsides and on several occasions wild-looking men with antiquated, but still lethal, weapons rushed down from a nearby hill feature and threw themselves in front of the car and brought it to a halt. Clad mainly in blue dye and scarcely adequate kilts, they crowded round the car and shook hands with the Political Officer and myself.

"Peace be with you," was their salutation.

"And to you peace," was our reply.

"Ya Toosh, is it true that there is a truce?" would ask the leader. 000

"Yes," replied the Political Officer.

"Do you swear it on your face?" was the next inquiry from one of the tribesmen who thrust his face into that of the Political Officer and spoke as if he was half a mile away, and his hearer was hard of hearing.

"I do," was the answer.

"Praise be to God," and with joy and more hand-shaking the tribesmen went back to their hills and a new future.

"You get on well with these chaps," I said to Alistair McIntosh, known throughout the Protectorate as "Toosh", the nearest the tribesmen could get to his name.

"Yes, we have much in common," said Alistair.

"What?" I asked, with surprise.

My companion was a well covered, apple-cheeked, and particularly comfortable looking scholar, who had looked forward to an academic career at his old University, where he had studied Oriental languages until the World War disrupted the even tenor of his life. Our recent visitors were certainly not scholars nor were they rosy-cheeked and comfortable; far from it, a more savage and ill-nourished looking lot of people it would be hard to find.

"My ancestors were cattle thieves like theirs, and our way of life was much the same," was the answer.

We followed the new road north from Mahfidh to Yeshbum, [491] a road made with difficulty and much hard manual labour by the Aden Protectorate Levies and the Government Guards aided by Aulaki tribesmen, a road linking these hitherto remote areas with the Aden Colony and the outer world. This was the road which later was destined to be blocked for many months by the wanton action of a few bigoted and misguided tribesmen of the Lower Aulaki encouraged and rewarded by the Imam's Governor of the Beidha area, the Qadhi Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami. These temporary setbacks are a nuisance, but they are really not more than this because roads have come to stay and newer and better roads have been planned which will drive through the Protectorate, some taking a new line,

491 others following the old, but all opening up the country and
making possible better security and greater trade.

794 At Yeshbum I stayed the night with a family of influential
184 Saiyids. They were very pleasant people indeed on the surface,
[178] though the opening up of the country must have been disagreeable
to all but the broad-minded among them, and Saiyids
like other religious leaders, are not renowned for their broadness
of mind. Inviolate as Saiyids, descendants of the Prophet
Muhammed, shrewd business men who lend money against
property mortgages, educated among an ignorant people, and
by tradition the mediators in family and tribal disputes, they
were powerful people whose influence was bound to be
affected adversely as contact with the outer world increased
and education became effective. My host of the evening was
Sheikh Ali Jifri, a charming elderly gentleman much afflicted
with rheumatism, who was far-sighted enough to recognise the
inevitable and to accept a change which he knew to be in the
interests of the Aulaki people. Unfortunately, he died not long
after my visit and his kindly influence was removed from his
brother and his sons and nephews. They have always been
difficult and resentful and have never really co-operated in the
setting up of the Aulaki administration and have not used their
influence in the right direction in the Council Chamber.
[185] Political interests in the neighbourhood of Aden and in the
Colony itself and the acquisition of agricultural land in the rich
cotton areas, have been their pursuits. Nasser of Egypt is their
idol and independence is their goal. What a pity learned students
of religion cannot be content with the greatest of all
occupations, the bringing of the word of God to the people
of this tortured earth. The truth is that the false gods of wealth
and power attract descendants of the Prophet in the same way
as other people, for after all, they are but human.

184 The following day we drove up the Wadi Yeshbum to Said,
the capital of the State beneath whose ancient towers I was to
be greeted by the Amir, his brothers and the tribal leaders.
[541] They were all ready for us where the Wadi broadens just
below the town and they formed a procession, firing their
rifles in the traditional manner, while their poets composed

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topical calypsos or, to use their own word, *zamils*, rhyming [541]
lines with a topical theme, part repeated by the chorus of [538]
tribesmen. It was the first time I had seen one of these tribal demonstrations, and I was thrilled as the blue kilted tribesmen, led by their Amir, moved in what seemed to be a tail-less snake of men, three abreast, round and round, coiling and uncoiling while rifles were being fired in the air with a delightful disregard for the eventual destination of their contents among the surrounding hills.

The procession over, I walked up the Wadi with the Amir 000
on one side and his eldest brother on the other, and as we passed a very modern-looking gun it commenced to fire my salute. It was some ten feet above us on the bank, and I inquired from where they had obtained the blank ammunition for the gun, for this was no black powder affair, and was not altogether surprised to learn that live ammunition was being used. I should like to have hastened my footsteps and got well clear before the next round, but that would have been very poorly thought of, so we continued our stately walk without haste or damage to anything, except our ear-drums.

The new administration made a good start, but that salute of 628
guns had been heard in the Yemen, although nearly two years 648
were to pass before the re-opening of an old family dispute 636
split the ruling family and gave the Imam his opportunity. The Yemen took sides with money and gifts of rifles and ammunition, and once again shots whistled along the narrow streets of Said, and as the infection spread and the tribesmen became restive, Abdullah, the Amir, faced serious trouble. By the grace of God and the opportune visit to the Protectorate of the then Minister of State, Mr. Hopkinson, now Lord Colyton, the additional financial help we needed so badly was made available to the young and struggling administration. Much can be done with money in Arabia, even to the extent of starting and stopping wars, as Lawrence demonstrated in the Hedjaz.

A young Assistant Adviser came to the Aulakis at the same 636
time (the designation "Political Officer" had been abolished, and "Assistant Adviser" introduced as being more truly

636 descriptive and therefore more suitable), who was one of themselves, being a grandson of the old Sheikh. Educated in Aden, Muhammed Farid had served as a Junior Assistant Adviser for some years, during which time with Alistair McIntosh's generous help, he learnt enough English to enable him to complete with outstanding success a one year Colonial Office Course at Oxford University. It was a magnificent effort. In his political work after returning from England, he was lucky to come under Hugh Boustead, the dynamic Resident in the Eastern Protectorate. Muhammed's task was extremely difficult, and it seemed scarcely fair to ask him to serve in his own country with family ties to distract him, but I felt that he and he alone would be capable of reuniting the Ruling family. I did not order him to go to Said, but asked him to do so, putting my difficulties before him quite frankly. He did not hesitate but agreed at once, realising that it was his duty to serve his country however much personal relationships might add to his difficulties. The younger generation have begun well.

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636 Having seen the Sheikhdom start on the right road, the next thing to do was to tackle the difficult problem of the Upper Aulaki Sultanate, whose Sultan Awd bin Saleh, was an eccentric person who seldom made a public appearance, preferring to spend his time in seclusion in his tumbled down house in Nisab, his capital. When he did appear in public the unusual spectacle, combined with the respect which his people had for him, resulted in a minor riot. Unfortunately he had been out of contact with Aden for some time, in fact, since the day in the middle thirties when he conceived the particularly silly idea that his son had been poisoned in the Civil Hospital. He was disinclined to answer letters, but resolute and tactful action by McIntosh resulted in contact being restored, and once that was done the restoration of confidence was only a matter of time.

A landing ground was made near Nisab and the elements of an administration were started. It was a particularly difficult task because the shortage of funds was acute. The Sultan was ill-provided with the wherewithal to finance even his own modest household, and it is my view that his eccentric be-

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haviour had its foundation in his poverty, which prevented him from entertaining in accordance with his social position. Once the financial problem was solved, the administration made reasonable progress and the Sultan, gaining confidence, became more co-operative and began to take an ever-increasing interest in his State, though I must confess he still remained rather unpredictable.

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In 1956, accompanied by a host of tribesmen, he went four or five miles to the landing ground to welcome Lord Lloyd, at that time Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was paying a visit to the Protectorate. I was astonished when our plane touched down to see him, and I must admit the old gentleman seemed almost equally surprised at finding himself out in the sunshine so far from home. We drove to Nisab, escorted by the Aden Protectorate Levies, across the wide plain in a cloud of dust, and avoiding the town, went straight to the Government Guard fort so that Lord Lloyd could talk to the Sultan in comparative privacy. It was only comparative, as the tribesmen packed the courtyard of the fort and were only, with difficulty, restrained from streaming up the stairs to the first floor in their anxiety to be close to their Ruler.

We talked in a small room overlooking the dry bed of the wadi, and "Rufus", as Lord Lloyd nicknamed the Sultan—he had dyed his beard a glorious red for the occasion—showed that eccentric though he might be, he was also a shrewd fellow. Our conversation over we went down into the courtyard, and such was the tribesmen's enthusiasm that Lloyd and I were swept aside as they surrounded the Sultan, and pouring through the main gate of the fort like water bursting from a breach in a dam, bore him off to his house in the town. Lloyd was, I think, slightly ruffled, but he recovered quickly and realised that it was not intentional rudeness, but over-enthusiasm, like a football crowd surrounding a popular player after the end of a successful Cup Final.

I met the Lower Aulaki Sultan for the first time in Aden, when he came with his uncle, the Regent, to pay his annual ceremonial call. I shall always remember the picture the small boy made—he was about eleven years old then—as he stood at the salute with my A.D.C. standing behind him facing the Guard of Honour of Armed Police, big men over seven feet in height to the top of their red head-dresses, as they "presented arms", while the bugles blew and the saluting battery at Fort Morbat fired his salute. Later, inside Government House, he was not nearly so martial and burst into tears when I suggested that he should leave home and go to the Bedouin Boys' School in Mukalla. He was not to be blamed for the tears. His uncle had frightened him with tales of the rigours of school life, not wanting the boy to escape from his immediate control even for a short time. I had other ideas, and although I did not press the point then, I took the first opportunity of going to Ahwar, the capital, and with the help of the boy's mother and maternal grandfather, contrived that he should be sent to school. The Regent, the Sultan's uncle, was so preoccupied with family feuds and his vendetta against those he thought responsible for the murder of his brother, the late Sultan, that he had no time to manage with any degree of efficiency the affairs of the State. He was to die himself in the same abrupt manner as his brother, being shot while dealing with a dispute over an irrigation channel. He was no loss and was followed as Regent by the Sultan's nearest male relative, a younger man whose whole bearing, with its panther-like strength, indicated that he was unlikely to die alone.

Two years after the Government House meeting I was to see the Sultan again, and this time in Mukalla, where I was staying with Hugh Boustead. It was afternoon and I was about to relax after a strenuous morning of inspections with Hugh by driving his Land-Rover up the beach in search of the odd duck, when in walked two small boys in the uniform of the Bedouin Boys' School. Paying no regard to me they saluted Hugh very smartly and asked whether they could have a Residency car to drive back to their school which was two miles outside the town. Hugh turned to me and said:

"I don't think you have recognised the Lower Aulaki Sultan, Sir."

I had not and I said so. Hugh spoke to the boys who turned smartly about and saluted and remained standing at attention 000 until I held out my hand and then, in turn, they stepped forward and shook hands.

"I'll take them along," I said, and they followed me downstairs into the car.

When we reached the school the Sultan jumped out and ran into the building, but to my surprise his companion remained in the car.

"Come on, get out," I said to him.

"He will be back in a minute," said the boy.

"I thought you wanted to come back to the school," I said.

"Only to borrow two rupees for tea, sir. It's a holiday today, Sir."

At that moment the Sultan rushed breathlessly out of the building and flung himself into the back of the Land-Rover.

"And now where do you want to go?" I asked.

"Back to the town, please, sir," answered the Sultan, and opening his hand in answer to a whispered inquiry from his companion displayed two rupees.

So back we had to go. My momentary irritation at having to retrace my steps quickly gave place to satisfaction at the change in the lad. I was being used as a taxi-driver, but I had brought it on myself.

I dropped them in the main street, and after shaking hands they saluted very smartly, turned about with the precision of Guardsmen, then relaxed and ran off like the normal boys they were in search of refreshment.

BEIHAN

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Up in the north of the western part of the Protectorate lies the State of Beihan, to which I paid many visits generally by air, but on one occasion by Land-Rover, coming in from the north-east across the sand dunes on the fringe of the Ruba-al-Khali, after an unforgettable tour of the northern Hadhrami Bedouin Legion Posts. Beihan is the home of the clever, 636 adventurous, dynamic and above all loyal Sharif Hussein who, 643 having ceased to be Regent for his son the Sultan in the first

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643 year of my term of office, has become the power behind the throne and manages his son and the State with skill and adroitness. His State borders the Yemen and the frontier is a continuous source of trouble with that country. The Sharif is no advocate of appeasement. He firmly believes that offence is the best defence, and he and his son have maintained their [648] position with our help against all comers. For some reason, as obscure to me as it is to the Oil Company who recently gave up their prospecting concession for the area, the Sharif and the Imam are convinced (it's the only point on which they don't differ sharply) that Beihan floats on oil and in consequence the Yemen has been more aggressive on the Beihan border than elsewhere and the struggle has been long and bitter between the Sharif and the neighbouring Yemeni Governors of Harib and Marib. The Imam would like to isolate Beihan from the rest of the Protectorate and has tried every trick in his extensive repertoire of deceptive magic, but the Sharif has so far more than held his own.

[648] In 1954 a Conference was held at Mukeiras in the Audhali Sultanate with the Yemen Governor of Beidha, the Qadhi Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami, with the object of trying to settle some of the Beihan border disputes. The Sharif and Ash Shami had had many hard and bitter duels in the past and there was little love lost between them, though I have no doubt a certain degree of mutual respect had been created. The Sharif flew from Beihan in a Valetta aircraft of the Royal Air Force which made a bad landing at Mukeiras, and bouncing off the landing ground, came to rest, rather dilapidated, on a nearby hill. The accident was witnessed by Ash Shami and the British Adviser who, with some local notables, were awaiting the arrival of the Sharif. They were horrified when they saw the undercarriage disintegrate and the plane collapse on its belly, and with the rest of the reception committee, rushed across the landing ground to help the survivors out of the wreckage. The first person to emerge from the damaged plane was the Sharif himself; unhurried and dignified he stepped out of the door which he had forced open, paused to light a cigarette, oblivious of the serious fire risk, and strolled over to receive

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Ash Shami's congratulations on his escape, to which he replied with his unexpectedly nice smile:

"You thought you had seen the last of me, didn't you? You are wrong again."

In 1956 when he was informed that we had taken the initiative and landed a force on Egyptian soil, he is reported to have said:

"Praise be to God, the old woman [Britannia] has woken up at last."

He has no love for Nasser and his poisonous radio broadcasts [648] which have done so much harm. I am very glad I was not there to hear what he had to say when he learnt we had gone from Egyptian soil with the task we had set ourselves uncompleted. My sympathy is with those who carried the news to him; his forthrightness could be very embarrassing even when there was much less excuse for plain speaking.

AUDHALI

Farther to the west, and also on the borders of the Yemen, 636
Sultan Saleh bin Hussein, the young Audhali Ruler, had con- 721
solidated his position to an extent which enabled him to remain 648
unshaken, though it was a severe personal shock to him as he 726
trusted their Sheikh, when the Dammanis, a sub-section of the Audhalis, forcibly resisted, at the instigation of the Yemen, our attempt to link the Audhali capital, Loder, with Nisab by motor road. The Yemen feared these new communications which would do much to consolidate the Protectorate and which in some pecu[illegible]r way they seemed to connect with the supposed oil resources of Beihan. Shots were fired and on a show of force by the Aden Protectorate Levies the Dammani rebels fled across the border to be rewarded, encouraged and sustained by the authorities at Beidha, which is only about thirteen miles from Mukeiras and which I have myself visited on more than one occasion. From the Yemen the rebels raided into their own country at night, returning to their base in the Yemen before dawn. 648

Ever obedient to the referee's whistle we played the game

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QADHI MUHAMMED ABDULLAH ASH SHAMI—YEMENI GOVERNOR OF BEIDHA PROVINCE

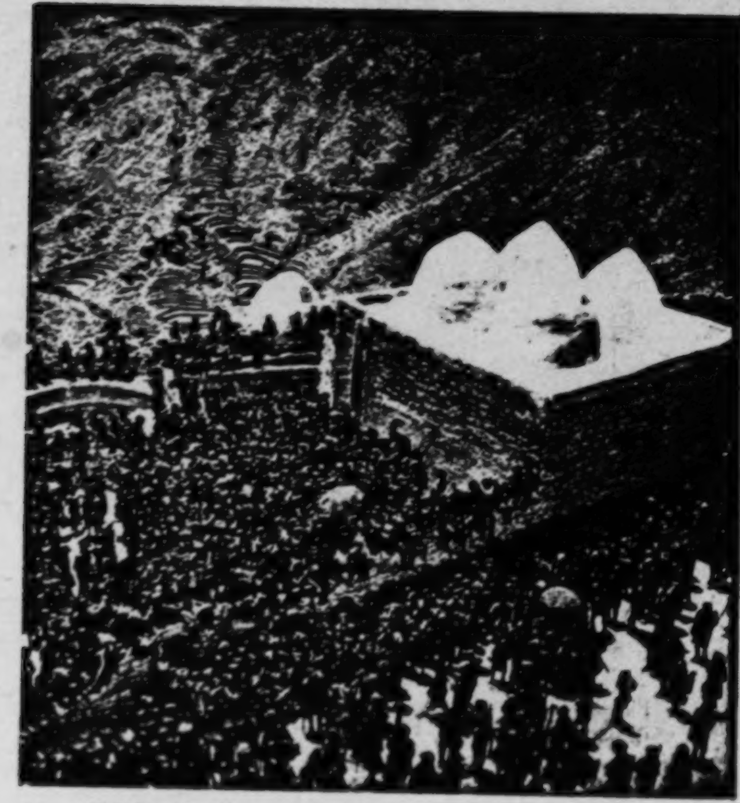
[facing p. 130]

according to the rules and tried to stop the raiders on our side of the frontier, but it was an impossible task that we had set ourselves and the tribesmen wondered at our stupidity. They knew that we had only to take direct action against the Yemen and rap them firmly over the knuckles and they would cease to give sanctuary to the Dammanis or anyone else, and, until they had forgotten the pain, be much better behaved. The tribesmen wondered why we did not take air action against the military barracks outside Beidha. They knew we had the aircraft and when nothing was done some of them began to wonder if the radio propaganda directed against us from Cairo was indeed true. We had left India and Burma and Ceylon and we were about to leave the Sudan. Was it possible, the waverers asked, that we were going to leave Aden and by so doing leave them to the mercy of the Imam and his Zeidis? If so, it would be as well to make what arrangement they could with the enemy, the Yemen, before we went, and it was too late. The Sultan himself never wavered even when the pressure was such that it would not have been surprising if he had shown some sign of the strain he was enduring. In public his demeanour was calm and cheerful, but in private, on my frequent visits to his State, he expressed his tribesmen's feelings very clearly. We had known each other for more than twenty years, and he talked to me as a friend rather than as the representative of the paramount power.

"I want to know," he said to me one day, "precisely why your Government does not take direct action against the Yemen, action which you could take at once with the resources at your disposal in Aden, and action which you know full well would bring all my troubles to an end in a few hours."

I explained the probable effect on world opinion of direct action by us against the Yemen, and I made the best case I could in the circumstances. The answer I received was on the following lines:

"I understand your arguments and I can follow the reasoning of your Government, but I don't agree with you and I don't consider that your Government's policy is the best in the circumstances. However, I realise that your Government has



AL QARA—TRIBESMEN SWARMING ROUND THE MOSQUE AFTER OUR ARRIVAL

[facing p. 131]

many things to consider about which my tribesmen and I have 648 little knowledge and I know that I must be patient. Remember, though, and let your Government remember, that we are primitive people, and like all primitive people we think with our eyes. We believe what we see and we understand only what is before our eyes. When my people see the Yemen encouraging the Dammanis to burn their crops and are not allowed by you to retaliate in kind, and when they see that no action is taken by you against the Yemen, then they believe that either you are afraid of the Yemen, or else that you don't care what happens to them. If you cannot do the one thing which will stop this trouble, then give us the arms to defend ourselves in our own way and let my tribesmen know that I speak the truth when I say you are on their side and care very much what happens to them."

Sometimes it is not easy to be the person set in authority over 000 others, whether it be as Governor or as Sultan.

My last visit to the Audhali country was in 1956 shortly 648 before I left Aden forever. I went by air to Mukeiras and spent a few days shooting pigeons and chikor in country I had come to know so well. Relations with the Yemen were still strained and my shooting was complicated by the security measures it was only sensible to take. We came to no harm, my six faithful guards and I, and we had a great deal of fun. On the last day of my short stay I said farewell to the Sultan and his brothers, and the tribesmen assembled on the edge of the landing ground, and then climbed into the waiting aeroplane which was already loaded with my guards and our kit. We taxied down to the end of the runway, the engines were tested, and we were away on the "take off". We gained speed rapidly, 000 passing the Sultan and his people lining the edge of the runway who all waved their last farewell, to which we in the plane replied by waving our hands at the windows, and then, suddenly, instead of becoming airborne, we began to slow down. The runway was rapidly coming to an end and beyond there was a very nasty drop. It was a question of whether or not we could stop before we reached the end. We all held on tight and probably prayed, I know I did, as we watched from the

000 windows the ground slipping by. We stopped just in time and I expected to be told we would have to wait for a relief aircraft, but no, without more ado, we taxied all the way back and tried again. This time no-one waved at anyone. The spectators were much too interested to see whether the plane succeeded in getting off on this second attempt to think of anything else, and we in the plane were similarly preoccupied with more excuse since we were more closely concerned. Nothing exciting happened, and half an hour later we landed safely in Aden. My luck had held to the end of my Service life. My thirty odd years in the wilder parts of the Middle East and in the more turbulent areas in Pakistan, have been strangely devoid of startling adventure, so much so that I am often envious of the wonderful adventures which seem to befall some travellers in as many weeks, or indeed days.

LAHEJ

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Down in the western corner of the Protectorate the Sultan of Lahej was drinking heavily and marrying with a frequency which bewildered the local Qadhi who got his registers in a muddle. Fadl had succeeded his father, His Highness Sultan Sir Abdul Karim bin Fadl, K.C.M.G., K.C.I.E., some three years before I became Governor, and for a time had devoted himself wholeheartedly to the affairs of his State. When he was about eighteen years of age his father had broken with tradition and named Fadl, his eldest son, as his heir, to the intense irritation of a collateral branch of the Ruling house who considered that their rights had thereby been infringed. There was a plot to murder the heir, and one afternoon Fadl came off the tennis court in Lahej all unsuspecting to speak to a petitioner who had at one time been in his service. As the lad approached, the petitioner drew a revolver and shot him through the left eye and in the groin. He was hurried to the hospital in Aden and later was taken to Newcastle, where thanks to the skill of Professor Gray-Turner he recovered from his wounds, outwardly little affected, but inwardly he had suffered a blow from which he never really recovered. He felt the loss of his

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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left eye terribly, and it impaired not only his actual physical vision, but what was much worse, his mental vision.

By 1951 he had ceased to take any real interest in his State, and had taken to drinking heavily, and my own efforts to persuade him to pull himself together were no more effective than those of my predecessor. He became more and more eccentric and when the worse for liquor he was not responsible for his actions. The end came one wild night when, more than usually irritated by his relatives, he had two of them tied to stakes in his front garden and shot them himself from the flat roof of his house. I immediately called him to account, and on my learning that the night after the murders he had fled to the Yemen, Lahej was occupied by the Aden Protectorate Levies and the Government Guards, and I went out personally and supervised the formation of a Council of Regency to manage the affairs of the State until the Electoral College could be called together in a more reasonable atmosphere to decide on a successor.

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On his way to the Yemen, Fadl passed through the country of his inveterate enemy the Haushabi Sultan, and that gentleman never forgave himself for being fast asleep when the fugitive passed within a few feet of his door. Fadl found no refuge in the Yemen where his deeds had shocked even the Imam, a man whose treatment of some of his own relations had been drastic, though not altogether without reason, and he was forced to move on to Jedda where I believe he still lives. I liked him and I shall always feel very sorry for him because he never really had much of a chance. With sympathetic treatment from his father and others in his youth, his character could have been strengthened, and he would then have made a good and able Ruler. Whatever may have been his faults, he retained the respect and the affection of his people to the end of his short reign, and even after he had gone they continued to speak well of him. He treated them well and never subjected them to the fits of temper which his relations came to dread.

In due course the Electoral College met and Sultan Fadl was formally deposed and the Amir Ali, his young half-brother, was

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nominated to succeed him as Sultan. Thus there came to the head of affairs in the premier State a young man, well educated, much travelled and full of promise. During the time I was Governor a great deal of progress was made in Lahej by the new Sultan, who as His Highness Sir Ali bin Abdul Karim, K.B.E., has taken considerable interest in the political development of the area and the economic prosperity of his State. Lahej was the first of the States to introduce a Legislative Council and now it is one of the major cotton growing areas, being blessed with the only perennial river in the whole of the western part of the Protectorate.

LOWER YAFA

131 Beyond the rich agricultural lands of the northern part of the Abiyan plain the Lower Yafa State stretches far up into the mountains to the highlands of Upper Yafa, a country of wild and hardy mountaineers who are more independent and [361] individualistic than any other of the Protectorate tribes. The Lower Yafa State has two capitals, one in the lowland plains at Al Hasn and the other in the hills at Al Qara. This latter town is quite the most extraordinary one that I have seen anywhere [487] in the world. It is built on the circular limestone cap of a very steep hill which looks like a truncated cone, and the town can be reached only by two very rough tracks, up which camels and donkeys can, with difficulty, make their way.

I was determined to visit Al Qara, partly out of sheer curiosity and partly because I was anxious to increase our influence in even the most remote areas of the Protectorate. Having obtained the willing agreement of the Sultan, the arrangements were made and my party, which consisted of the Director of Agriculture, the Director of the Protectorate Health Service, a Geologist who was making a survey of the Protectorate, a Political Officer or Assistant Adviser who was in charge of the expedition, and a personal friend, covered the first part of the journey by car from Aden along the Khormaksar beach and across the Abiyan plain to where the Bana river emerges from the hills. There we spent the night at a

Government Guard Post above the headworks of the Bana 000 canal system, which irrigates the Western half of the plain and makes possible the valuable cotton crop.

The next day, leaving the motor transport on the flat ground below the Government Guard Post and taking to horses, camels or donkeys or our feet, as we felt inclined, we moved into the hills. My friend started on a horse but rather abruptly parting company with the animal he took to a camel the next day, but finding it no easier to keep his seat and rather farther to fall, he changed to a donkey on the third day. However, he was no more successful with the ass and he then walked without further misadventure.

Personally, I have always preferred to ride a donkey, which though not a very dignified proceeding was one which experience had taught me, especially in hilly country, was the most likely to get me to my destination in one piece and with the least fatigue. The Sultan had sent his own donkey for my use and I rode the animal there and back, except on the passes and on Al Qara hill itself, without mishap. The baggage travelled on camels and the two passes we had to negotiate on this journey tried severely even these hardy animals accustomed as they were to stony wadis and rocky mountain paths. For the greater 133 part of the time we travelled along the beds of the steep-sided 312 mountain valleys, dry for most of the way, but in places a stream of clean fresh water rose unexpectedly to the surface and after flowing for a mile or so over the stony bed of the valley vanished underground as abruptly as it had appeared. The water was crystal clear and delightfully cool and looked most refreshing, but our doctor had warned us most strictly that we must on no account drink it for fear of infection with all sorts of dreadful diseases and must rely solely for drinking on the water we carried with us on the baggage animals.

The Sultan had gone on ahead of us to prepare for our 000 arrival at Al Qara and had left his eldest son, Sultan Muhammed, to act as our escort. Sultan Muhammed led the cavalcade on a horse with a motley assortment of tribesmen running at his stirrup, while I followed on my donkey with an ex-Jemadar of the Aden Police as my companion. He rode

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

000 a rather more inferior donkey, and seemed to hold some sort of quasi-political appointment in the State; he spoke Urdu, which he had learnt during his police service in Aden. He and I conversed together in that language to the irritation of Europeans and Arabs alike who could not understand what we were saying. Perhaps it was as well. The Jemadar and I had quite an amusing time. The rest of the party followed on behind, with the doctor bringing up the rear after the baggage animals, ready to deal with any casualties.

We always started the daily march early in the morning after the lightest of meals and moved steadily forward until midday, when we would halt to rest and feed the animals and ourselves; just before sunset, we would select a camp site among the terraced fields at the side of the valley and a hot meal would be prepared by the cooks, while our servants set up our camp-beds in the open and we relaxed on rugs spread on the bare ground. Sleep came easily.

[361] On the last day as we approached our destination, we could
see Al Qara gleaming white far above us on its hilltop and by
mid-morning we were near the base of the hill. Just before noon
[291] we crossed a small rise and there on the flat ground immediately
[302] below the hill thousands of tribesmen were drawn up in lines
awaiting our arrival. Blue kilts, indigo-dyed bodies, bobbed
[411] hair, rough leather sandals and the inevitable armoury of rifle,
cartridge belt and silver sheathed dagger; they were as splendid
[643] as they were unexpected in that wild and seemingly sparsely
populated country. Sultan Muhammed and I moved forward on foot to greet the Sultan who, dressed in a purple plush frock coat, a blue and yellow striped kilt and a head cloth of the same colours, was busily engaged acting as ringmaster in the midst of this amazing scene. Like his men he carried a rifle, and as we approached welcoming shots were fired by him and his immediate entourage and replied to by his son and my party. The Sultan and I exchanged the customary greeting and shook hands, and then I shook hands with the tribal leaders and walked down the ranks of tribesmen.

000 Up to this point everything had been remarkably well ordered and controlled, but when the Sultan who was by

local standards an elderly man, and rather infirm, mounted 000 my, or rather his, donkey, and I a horse and we started to climb up the steep path which led to the town some thousand feet above us, all vestige of discipline vanished and things became chaotic. The tribesmen broke their ranks, swarmed round us and up the hill climbing from vantage point to vantage point to see us go by along the narrow winding path. My companions were hustled and complained of gross bad manners, to put it mildly; personally, I saw and heard nothing of the bad manners, but then I was close to the Sultan, and his immediate entourage were able to keep the inquisitive at a reasonable distance; besides, my attention was concentrated on my mount. I am not a good horseman, and surrounded by that blue clad mob I had quite an exciting ride up the narrow path which in places ran along a steep drop of several hundred feet. Near the top my horse became difficult, upset I have no doubt both by the crowd of excitable creatures pushing and shoving and my style of riding to which he was not accustomed. He began to advance crab fashion and to indulge in mild bucks, which I found disconcerting to say the least of it. Then he changed his tactics and turned sideways on the narrow path and stood on his hind legs and pawed with his forelegs in space. We both looked over the abyss. I dismounted—I thought it better to do so—and walked the rest of the way.

At the top we were accommodated in the Sultan's town 644 house opposite the Mosque, while he occupied his new house on a spur of the hill outside the town where we were to lunch the next day. All afternoon the mass of tribesmen swarmed through the town, where they were fed by the Sultan, shouting and singing. It was not until nightfall that they dispersed back to their villages in the surrounding mountains, after having broken the water cistern at the Mosque and destroyed parts of the path up which we had climbed, making it impassable for the baggage animals. Whether the rougher elements 600 were disappointed with their Ruler's hospitality, as some people said, or whether they were annoyed at the coming of "foreigners" to Al Qara as others maintained, I have no idea. It was probably six of one and half a dozen of the other, and

000 I should not have been at all surprised to hear that my old friend Ash Shami had had a hand in the matter. We were not far from the Yemen border and the presence of the Governor of Aden in the Lower Yafa hills where only one of my predecessors had been before, and that nearly twenty-five years previously, implying as it did a potential extension of our direct influence, must have been disturbing to that astute gentleman.

487 The path down the hill was still impassable for animals
312 when we left Al Qara to return to Aden two days later, so
562 we were obliged to leave by the other track on the other side
of the hill which is used by the women to bring water from the wells in the valley far below.

643 We started the return journey in the early morning after
793 bidding our host, the Sultan, farewell and thanking him for his
778 kindness to us during the visit. We left him there alone, the
534 descendant of the old priest kings of pagan pre-Islamic times,
789 surrounded by his wild tribesmen who in times of trouble
venerate him as they would a God, for is he not the custodian of the drum of the Yafais which is kept in some secret chamber in Al Qara only to be sounded when the Yafa nation is in sore distress, and has he not the magical gift of rain-making in times of drought, like his ancestors before him. These things they believe, but when the rainfall is sufficient and the Yafa people are free from want or oppression then they treat him with scant ceremony, which is the fate of all gods, ancient or modern, in the East or in the West.

000 The return journey, being downhill all the way, was much easier and quicker and we had to spend only one night in the open. On the second and last day of the return journey something went wrong with the lunch-time arrangements and I, mounted once again on the Sultan's donkey, rode past the rendezvous and did not realise that I had done so until I had travelled some distance. Loath to retrace my steps, I decided to forgo lunch and to push on to the Government Guard Post below which, on the way up, we had left our motor transport. I rode alone for most of the way, except for the Jemadar and his bosom companion, an elderly Qadhi, who had travelled up

with us and was now returning to his work somewhere on the 000
Abiyan plain. I had no armed escort from the Government
Guards. The safety of my companions and myself rested with 643
the Sultan who was fully prepared to accept his responsibility. 574
In fact, if I had attempted to take an armed escort on this particular trip, we would almost certainly have never got to Al Qara at all. The independent-minded tribesmen would undoubtedly have resisted the movement of armed men into their country and we should have been faced with the alternative of turning back or having to force a passage. Not really an alternative because I had not, in those days, a sufficient force at my disposal to overcome spirited resistance from thousands of tribesmen in that tangle of hills.

QUAITI

Both during my term of office as Governor and during my 361
earlier periods of service in Aden I paid frequent visits to [712]
Mukalla, *the capital of* the Quaiti State in the Eastern Aden Protectorate, which nestles below a high hill feature on which stand the now empty watch towers that in days gone by protected the wealthy merchants of the town from bedouin raiders. Mukalla has a fascinating little harbour and the town is grouped attractively round a bay filled with the bluest water that I have ever seen. Viewed from the broad beach outside the ancient gateway as the sun is setting, the town and the hill behind it are suffused with a golden light, and the slender white minarets of the Mosques are a delicate shade of pink. It is really beautiful.

Here in Mukalla are not only the business houses of the 366
merchants who trade with the Far East and Aden and supply 441
the Hadhramaut with its innumerable wants, but also the palace 368
of the Sultan, the British Residency, and the Government
Offices of the Quaiti administration. Outside the walls of the 712
town are the depot of the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion and the barracks of the Mukalla Regular Army and the Quaiti Armed
Constabulary. Here also is the Bedouin Boys' School, a board- 346
ing school for the sons of tribesmen run by the State on the

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lines of a military school where the discipline is strict and the
[292] boys are taught to be self-reliant. Dressed in their school
uniform of blue smock, gathered at the waist with a red sash
[541] and a white cotton head cloth held in place by a black cord,
these boys put on a physical training display on gala occasions
which would not disgrace the Royal Tournament at Earl's
Court.

643 The old Sultan, His Highness Sir Saleh bin Ghalib,
K.C.M.G., was a well-read and wise old gentleman whose
death in 1956 was a sad blow to his people and to his State.
[533] I have enjoyed his hospitality on more than one occasion and
listened with pleasure to his band which, under an Indian
Bandmaster, played Eastern and Western tunes with equal
facility. It was this band that played at Government House in
Aden when Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness
Prince Philip, honoured me with their presence at lunch in
1954. His Highness was himself present on that occasion,
together with other representatives of the Protectorate and the
[523] Colony. In his own house after dinner it was the Sultan's
custom to entertain his guests with a cinema show which,
whether composed of commercial productions or of films he
had himself produced and photographed, was always entertaining,
even though the sound was rather overpowering: I could
never understand, since he was certainly not deaf, why he
always had the sound turned up to such a degree that one was
almost deafened. The Sultan loved anything to do with films
and knew more than most amateurs about the mechanism of
his cameras, projectors and tape recorders. It was in Mukalla
that I saw and heard Charlie Chaplin speaking Arabic; an
Arabic sound track having been added by the Sultan himself
to one of the old silent Chaplin films.

636 Politically the State was more advanced than most of the
643 Protectorate States and His Highness ruled with the aid of a
645 State Council, on which were not only the able Sudanese Chief
Minister and the astute Pakistani Finance Minister, but unofficial
Arab members representing trading and other interests
642 in the State. Throughout the State, control and government
636 have been decentralised down from the Central Government

in the capital through the Provincial Administrations to the 642
Districts into which the provinces are divided. The Resident 636
Adviser and his staff worked in the closest co-operation and
accord with the Sultan and his officials with the emphasis very
much on advice. The Resident Adviser believed passionately 000
in letting people learn by actually doing the job and he discouraged his subordinates from doing too much themselves. Hugh Boustead's policy under his inspired guidance has had most gratifying results and a sound administrative structure has been built up from local material. He himself is the most energetic and inspiring person with whom I have ever served but, I confess, I did on occasion find him exhausting; always on the move and perpetually blowing a referee's whistle for some underling or other. All the servants had been allotted a definite number of blasts on the infernal instrument and came running when their number sounded. I found it most trying —it made me jump—and when I was staying with him he kindly put it away and was at a loss what to do when he wanted an orderly to take a message, or a servant to bring a glass of water. He drank pints and pints of water and worried perpetually about taking a chill, being followed wherever he went by an orderly with a selection of pullovers of varying hue, thickness and age. The slightest change in temperature resulted in one coming off or one going on, and sometimes he seemed to be forever dressing or undressing. All great people have some idiosyncrasy; it distresses me sometimes that I have never been able to detect one in myself.

This fad of Hugh's was extraordinary when you realise that he had taken part in an Everest expedition, had represented his country in the Olympic Games, had served in the Navy and in the Army, and was at one time a boxer of note and had endured incredible hardship in the Sudan and elsewhere during his very outstanding career. He had very firm ideas, and he was independent by nature—but who would not be with his background and experience—and I knew full well that I need not worry about the Eastern Protectorate while he was in command. The only time when we did not always hold identical views was towards the end of a tour with him, when his

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

000 inexhaustible energy had reduced me to a physical and nervous
wreck—and I was the younger man.

861 Near Mukalla to the east beyond the landing ground at
346 Riyan is the collegiate town of Ghil-Ba-Wazir, so called by
249 me because it seemed to consist of nothing but schools surrounded
439 by a few fields of Hammumi tobacco which normally
was exported to Egypt via Aden. Primary schools and a large
871 State Intermediate School with a considerable boarding
establishment catered for the youth of Mukalla and the more
[875] advanced pupils from all over the State. The masters, who were
local men or Sudanese on contract, always left me with an
impression of keenness, competence and contentment. From Ghil-Ba-Wazir the more promising pupils went on to Aden College or the Technical Institute in Aden, or to a Secondary School in the Sudan, depending on the inclination of the parents or of the Mukalla Government if they were financing the boys' further education.

315 Up in the vast open spaces of the northern limits of the State, survey parties of Petroleum Concessions Ltd. moved farther and farther into territory which was practically unknown to Europeans, on their ceaseless quest for oil, spurred on by recent increases in the cost of their prospecting licence. As these parties pushed their way northwards so did similar parties from the Arabian-American Oil Company at Dhahran on the Persian Gulf in Saudi Arabia move steadily southward with their portable drilling rigs drawn by great tractors and their air-conditioned living caravans, across the great yellow sand dunes of the Ruba-al-Khali.

712 The frontier became of considerable importance, much more
312 so than it had ever been before and we found it advisable to
exercise a greater degree of control over our tribes than had
626 been necessary or desirable in the past. The Sultan was concerned
about the peace of these northern marches, and, fearing an act of aggression, felt that steps should be taken to safeguard the well at Thamud, the only available water for many miles around. This was done by building a fort, constructing a landing strip and flying in a garrison of soldiers of the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion. Later, similar measures were taken over to

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the east at Sanau where the only well was between Thamud 626
and the Aden-Muscat frontier. These two places lie to the 312
south of the great sand dunes of the Ruba-al-Khali amidst country more desolate than I have ever seen in any part of the world, and in my time I have flown over, driven over or walked and ridden over some pretty uninviting country.

I went to Thamud for the first time in 1953, before the fort had been built, to inspect the detachment of the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion who were living in holes scraped out of the hard sand and furnished with a canvas roof as some protection against the fierce heat of the sun. It was not easy to pick up the well from the air in that featureless country and it reflects great credit on the navigator and the pilot of the 'plane that they found the landing strip at the first attempt. We landed a mile or so from the well, and the only signs of life as we drove to the well were the store-cum-hospital tent, a modest affair of some 160 lbs., which normally would sleep a dozen men, and the two much smaller tents of the Military Assistant to the Resident Adviser and the Commandant of the Legion who had joined the detachment temporarily, the former a Scot from the Highlands and the latter a stout and jovial Arab on secondment from the Arab Legion in Trans-Jordan.

A guard was mounted, which I inspected, and I do not recall 625
ever having seen a better turned-out or smarter body of men 701
anywhere. These men, who are recruited from the bedouin tribes, are responsible among other things for guarding the long Aden-Saudi Arabian frontier, and they do their work very well. They work under the direct control of their own Arab officers who command the Frontier Posts and who are responsible for the motor patrols which operate between the Posts. These motor patrols are equipped with Land-Rovers and carry portable wireless sets which enable them to keep in touch with their parent Post. The Military Assistant is stationed hundreds of miles away in Mukalla where the Commandant also has his headquarters, so that these Arab officers and their men are normally very much on their own and quickly learn to use their own initiative in dealing with sudden emergencies and solving the various problems which are the normal lot of

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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701 independent commanders in out-of-the-way places. In a serious
crisis the Commandant of the Legion and the Military Assistant
would be flown up to the nearest Post and the Commandant
would take over the general control of the situation, sure in the
knowledge that he could call on the Military Assistant, an
experienced soldier, for advice at any time. Behind them both
there was Hugh Boustead, capable of dealing with almost any
situation single-handed, and behind him was Aden and the
Royal Air Force ready and willing to help at any time. Everything was in good shape and I never had any qualms about our
ability to deal with interlopers on the Saudi frontier.

648 In 1955 Her Majesty's Government formally declared the
[315] co-ordinates of the line south of which they would not
tolerate the unrestricted movement of foreign subjects, and it
was not long after this announcement was made to the Saudi
Government that an American oil-survey party operating in
two sections with an armed Saudi escort, trespassed in two
separate places. They were located from the air and in no
time the Military Assistant with an adequate escort from the
Hadhrami Bedouin Legion, had moved by air and Land-Rover
to intercept them. The error of their ways was pointed out to
them and they withdrew promptly with their escort, leaving
their expensive equipment behind in spite of being told they
could take it with them. The escort had second thoughts and
returned and were promptly taken into custody and disarmed
without a shot being fired and later sent to Jedda by a civil Air
Line. As far as I know the equipment is still in the desert; it
certainly was in 1956 when I drove that way, and it was already
showing very clearly the effects of sun, sand and the bedouin.

648 It was in the same year, 1955, that the Buraimi business in
669 Trucial Oman where the Sheikhdom of Abu Dhabi meets the
Sultanate of Muscat and Oman, upset King Saud. Stolen fruit
[181] is always so much sweeter than that which is got by legitimate
means and in this case both *hasad* and *sharf* were involved—
"jealousy" and "honour", those two curses of Arabia which
have kept the peoples and the countries divided for generations
and generations. The King showed his irritation with Great
Britain by sending arms to the bedouin in the northern areas

of the Protectorate, and his officials encouraged them to revolt against their Arab Rulers, to whose assistance we would be bound, in such circumstances, to send our Forces. The first consignment of rifles arrived by lorry and they were distributed to all and sundry, just within Saudi limits where the Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Aden frontiers all meet, and some of them fell into the hands of Yemenis with no love for their Ruler. This did not suit the Imam at all and he protested to the Saudis, not against the distribution of arms, but against it being done so close to his border and in such a haphazard manner. The Saudi officials changed their methods and the next lorry load of rifles was sent right in to Quaiti State territory where it was captured promptly by the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion with the help of the Royal Air Force. The Saudi authorities were discouraged by the impenetrable screen *of patrols by air and by* land which was introduced forthwith and no more attempts were made to send arms to the tribesmen. Instead, the tribesmen were encouraged to go to Saudi Arabia and collect the arms personally, at the same time taking an oath to use them against their "oppressors". They went in some numbers, caring little about the distance and less about the oath, which seemed to these simple-minded people a small price to pay for a valuable weapon. Most of them did not class either their Rulers or ourselves as "oppressors". They were much more likely to regard in that light a neighbour who had been disagreeable recently about irrigation water, or with whom they had a long standing private vendetta.

The tribesmen moved more quickly than the Saudis had anticipated and a camp had to be pitched for them in which to await the arrival of the promised arms. This did not please the tribesmen, who were anxious to get home before their absence had attracted attention and they grew impatient and quarrelled with the Saudis and with each other. The rifles still did not appear and the tribesmen became mote and more troublesome until eventually, heartily sick of the whole business, the Saudi officials dismissed the tribesmen with a few riyals and no rifles, and closed the camp. The tribesmen, furious at being cheated, as they considered it, returned home with very definite views

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

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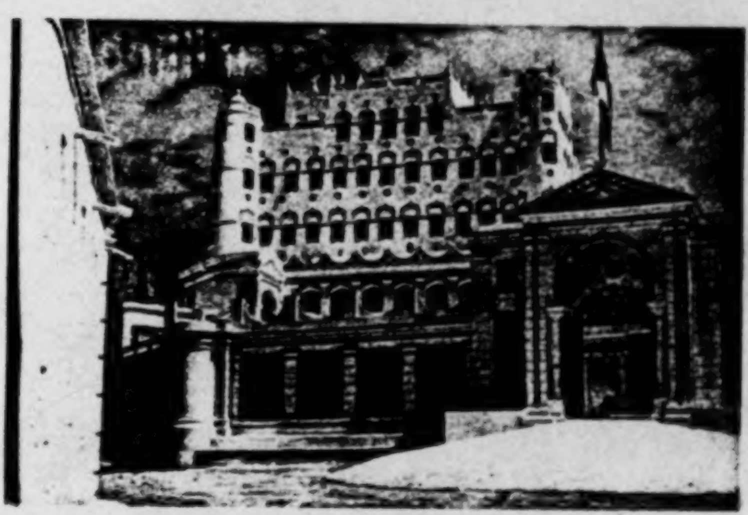
THE WELL BELOW A HADHRAMI BEDOUIN LEGION POST IN THE NORTHERN DESERT



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THE KATHIRI SULTAN'S PALACE AT SAIYUN

[facing p. 146]

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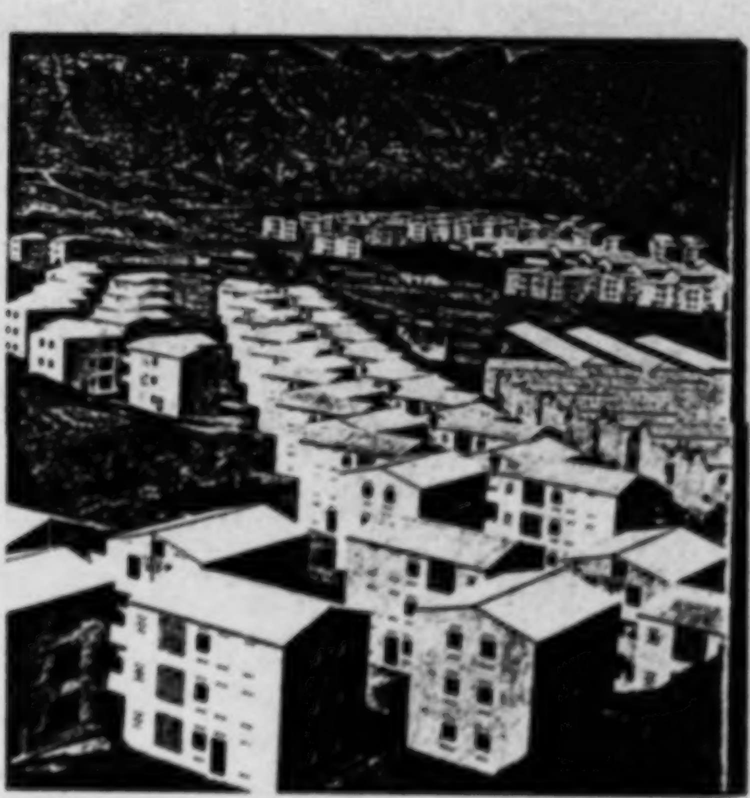
669 about the Saudi authorities and the whole affair did us more good than harm, demonstrating as it did the efficiency of our local forces and Royal Air Force ground-air co-operation and the value of a Saudi promise. Various diplomatic kettles in other parts of the world went off the boil, and I had no further trouble on the Saudi frontier.



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GOVERNMENT HOUSING SCHEME 1955–56. BLOCKS OF FLATS FOR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

(By courtesy of the P.R.O., Aden)

[facing p. 147]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

CHAPTER EIGHT

Protectorate Development

THE people of all the States of the Protectorate are, for the most part, hardworking and competent farmers depending as they do primarily on agriculture for their living. Fate has not treated them very kindly, having so arranged matters that the areas with the most tillable land have the smallest rainfall. The absence of rain is compensated for in some places by the presence of water-courses which, though dry for most of the year, become flooded during the late summer and autumn when there is, normally, heavy rain in the hills. These flood waters have, in Lahej and in Abiyan and in one or two other areas, been harnessed and an irrigation system spreads the water over the land and the valuable cotton and other crops are the result. 241 [134] [132] [312] [248]

The idea of developing the Abiyan plain was conceived by Brian Hartley, the then Director of Agriculture in 1940, when shortage of foodstuffs, due to the World War, turned everyone's thoughts to finding alternative local sources of supply which would not be affected by shortage of shipping and the interruption of normal sea communications. Abiyan is a flat open plain triangular in shape with the apex buried in the Yafa hills and the broad base along the shores of the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. It slopes gently from north to south and it is intersected by two large Wadis, the Bana and the Hassan. These two Wadis run far up into the highlands of the Yemen and every summer the seasonal floods come rushing down them as the rain clouds from the Indian Ocean break over the distant hills. These floods are rich in silt which fertilises the soil on which it is deposited. Hundreds of years ago 654 241 133 133 132 312 134 •oo

241 Hundreds of years ago Aden
133 the value of these silt-laden seasonal floods was realised by the
312 people of the plain, and they initiated an elaborate irrigation
134 system, the remains of which exist to the present day. Years of
726 inter-tribal warfare which benefited no-one, brought the original system to ruin and the land went out of cultivation and the silt-laden waters rushed unimpeded headlong to the sea to discolour the ocean for many miles.

654 Hartley started with a modest capital of £10,000 granted
312 by His Majesty's Government for the purchase of seed grain
241 and for the hiring of bullocks to build dams and till the ground;
648 and with this modest sum he was able to bring 700 acres under
[726] cultivation. The tribes were loath to give up what had become their battle-field, and their silly futile squabbles interrupted Hartley's efforts until the patience of the Aden Government was exhausted and measures were taken to enforce security in the area.

648 Once the World War was over, food production was no
654 longer of paramount importance, and with the economic
248 future of the area in mind long staple Egyptian cotton cultiva-
178 tion was successfully introduced, and by an Administrative Order of my predecessor, an organisation known as the Abiyan Board was set up to manage the whole agricultural project. Additional capital to the extent of £270,000 was obtained as a loan from His Majesty's Government and there was rapid development, so that by the time I became Governor several thousand acres were under cotton cultivation. The Board directed the agricultural policy of the area, was responsible for pest control, owned and operated the heavy agricultural machinery necessary for the economic working of the land, owned and operated two cotton ginning factories, controlled the distribution of flood water through the irrigation canals and channels, and was responsible for the shipping and marketing of the cotton crop.

648 In spite of the changed circumstances of the Board they continued to function by virtue of the original Administrative Order. All efforts by my predecessor to regularise the position by persuading the Fadli and Lower Yafa States, within whose territories Abiyan is situated, to enact decrees failed owing to

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the intransigence of the Lower Yafa State Council. I was no more successful, and towards the end of my association with Aden there arose a serious disagreement between the States and the Board.

The States had grown rich and the farmers prosperous as a result of their own hard work, and the Board's activities and guidance, and they began to think that they knew all about the cultivation of such a specialised crop as high grade cotton. The Board had grown rich also and had become a trifle domineering and, of course, it was managed by an Englishman and had a number of British employees. It was just about this time that nationalism became rampant in the Middle East and the indigestion of unaccustomed wealth from which the States were already suffering, was rendered acute by the flatulence of anti-British broadcasts from Egypt. Dissatisfaction with the goose that had laid and was laying the golden eggs became acute.

The policy of the Board was directed by a Committee 654
which functioned under the chairmanship of the British 648
Adviser and was composed of representatives of the two States, the Manager of the Board and the Director of Agriculture. Unfortunately the Board did not always pay heed to the directions of this Committee and there was no doubt that the States were not without genuine cause for some dissatisfaction. It was high time that the future organisation of the Board was considered seriously and its exact functions more clearly defined. Various schemes were considered and rejected until, at last, one was produced that my advisers and I thought would meet the rapidly changing political conditions and at the same time would regularise the Board's increasing activities outside the Abiyan area in Lahej and elsewhere, and which were no concern of the Fadli and Lower Yafa States.

The new scheme gave very considerable power to the States, but the essential right of Government to act in an emergency to prevent a breakdown due to inter-State disputes or gross mismanagement was retained. I should make it quite clear that the States had no quarrel with the Board's British employees whose value they did not underestimate and whose services they were most anxious to retain. The Fadli representative, the Sultan's Minister or Naib as he is called, was favourable to my scheme and was prepared to advise the Fadli State Council to enact the decree necessary to give it legal force in their State. Not so, however, the Lower Yafa Naib who was Sultan Muhammed with whom I had journeyed to Al Qara and who objected to power to act in an emergency being specifically assigned in the scheme to Government. He maintained that his State Council, of which he was President, would not be prepared to approve the decree necessary to bring the scheme into force in Lower Yafa. What he really meant was that he would advise the Council not to approve. I went to Abiyan personally and discussed the matter fully with both the Naibs, but I was no more successful than the British Agent had been with his considerable powers of persuasion, and Sultan Muhammed remained firmly in opposition. The only thing to do was to let the matter rest for a while and hope that time would bring about a change in the Yafa attitude.

Unfortunately time was not given much of a chance to show what wonders it could work, because the Lower Yafa Sultan, who had made over his authority in the lowland area of his State, which included the Yafa lands on the Abiyan plain to the Council, while retaining personal control of his highlands, suddenly lost his temper and clapped his son and several members of the Council into prison. Why the Sultan lost his temper has remained a mystery, and he had probably forgotten the reason himself the next morning, because he ordered the release of the prisoners and directed them to resume their various offices. He released them because it was brought to his notice that he had given me an undertaking to occupy himself exclusively with the highlands and not to interfere with his son and the Council in their conduct of affairs in the lowlands. The Council members were very cross indeed and refused to resume their functions and, led by Sultan Muhammed, most of them motored off to Lahej, leaving a void which was filled within two hours by an Assistant Adviser and a detachment of Government Guards. Swift and firm action is essential if

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disorder is to be prevented when the Cabinet, led by the Prime Minister, go away and leave their country to its own devices.

There was no trouble at all and disappointed by the result of their demonstration the Naib and his colleagues thought better of their hasty action after a few days and returned to their duty, and the Government Guards went back to Aden to await the next emergency. The atmosphere was still not conducive to calm thinking, so the negotiations about the reorganisation scheme for the Board were further delayed, while the Naib and some of the Council members prepared to form with the Fadli Naib and representatives of his Council a joint mission which, under the experienced guidance of the Director of Agriculture was being sent to London and Liverpool to discuss cotton prices and the method of disposal of the cotton crop when the Board's contract with the Raw Cotton Commission expired. It was thought that the change of air and change of scene would do everyone good, and very soon the minds of those who had not travelled to the West before were absorbed with such problems as how to button up a pair of trousers and whether the shirt went inside or outside.

Up in the highlands of Upper Yafa where the rainfall is sufficient for coffee to be grown, there is very little soil, and the hardy inhabitants have conserved every inch they can find by terracing their steep hills to their very tops. I always enjoyed flying over this country which I never reached on foot, and looking down at the mountains which, with their intricate terraces looked exactly like a geography model designed to illustrate contouring, so closely have the builders followed the natural course of the ground. The coffee produced in these hills is as fine as the so-called "Mocha" coffee of the Yemen and most of it finds its way down to Aden and from there, after being graded for quality, reaches the markets of the United Kingdom and the United States. I said so-called "Mocha" coffee because in point of fact no coffee is grown in the neighbourhood of Mocha, which is a small sea port on the Yemen coast of the Red Sea which gave its name to the coffee which was exported from there after having been brought down by

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245 camel from the high hills of the interior. Coffee will not grow below 4,000 ft. at the latitude of Aden and the Yemen.

244 Away to the east on the Audhali plateau and in the other
243 high regions, wheat and barley are cultivated by well water
312 irrigation from shallow wells, and apricot trees grow naturally
245 among the fields and grape vines run over the trees that border the grassy valleys. Much attention has been given to increasing the fruit cultivation and to the growing of tomatoes and other
[177] vegetables in the summer time when the low lying plains are far too hot. Plums and apples and peaches and walnuts have been introduced successfully, and lower down citrus culti-
262 vation has had surprisingly good results. Originally, of course,
178 the idea was that these fruits and vegetables would be available
433 to the Colony markets and to a certain extent this has proved to be true, but no-one anticipated the extent to which local consumption of vegetables and fruit would increase in the
(177) Protectorate itself. It is extraordinary how quickly people will develop a taste for new varieties of vegetables, as I had found in Muscat when I first introduced cabbages. Nobody had seen them before and at first I had to give them away and persuade people to eat them, but it was not long before they came and helped themselves. It was much the same in the Protectorate with lettuce, which was looked upon with distrust when I first travelled to Loder and Mukeiras, but by the time I left twenty-five years later no meal was complete without a dish of salad.

243 Down in the plains the main crops are sorghum and bullrush
262 millet which grow throughout the Protectorate and provide the staple diet of the people who grind and pound the grain into coarse flour from which they make a very palatable un-
245 leavened bread. Where water is available in sufficient quantity
312 as at Lahej and in the Wadi Hadhrami, there are extensive
244 date-palm plantations and bananas, and other Eastern fruits are cultivated with particular emphasis on the melons which flourish abundantly and are of excellent quality.

241 Two things have handicapped agricultural development in
441 the Protectorate. The first of these is lack of money and the second lack of a suitable marketing organisation. The power to

remedy the first need was never in my hands, but the opportunity to produce some form of marketing organisation was, 241 441 and it has taken shape and should be on the way to finding new and extending old markets for the fruit and vegetables of the Protectorate. It will have to overcome the conservative [439] ideas of the Boards of Directors of Shipping Companies who prefer the more expensive Egyptian produce nicely wrapped up in pink paper to cheaper and better quality produce unwrapped. Nasser has possibly helped the Marketing Officer indirectly, and a judicious purchase of pink paper and elegant crates, for which of course they will be charged, will persuade the P. & O. S.N. Company, The Orient Line, the British India and other Shipping Companies to support a Protectorate which has so far remained loyal in the face of grave provocation. I made every effort I could personally to interest the vast purchasing power of the 22,000,000 net registered tons of shipping using Aden port every year, but I made no impression.

The primary need was undoubtedly for money, but that was 652 the one thing that was not forthcoming in sufficient quantity 648 to make any real impression. During the eighty-nine years that India was responsible for the Protectorate not one single penny was made available for any form of development or for the provision of any form of social service. Since 1928 when the Colonial Office became responsible for the 112,000 square miles and the 800,000 or so inhabitants, the average annual subvention would amount to £90,000 or 1.35*d.* per head of population. A total sum of £2,000,000 has been made available from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and no direct grant, other than the £10,000 in 1940 for food production, was made for development purposes before the inception of that fund. If the whole or the major portion of this sum could have been devoted to agricultural projects much might now have been completed which has still to be started, but the demands of the Health and the Education Services had to be considered and the improvement of communications was a major item which consumed more than half of this sum, and the amount left for agricultural development, which would

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648 bring if not plenty at least enough to the inhabitants, was pitifully small.

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178 In all rural areas education seems to be of secondary importance to the inhabitants and the Aden Protectorate was no exception to this rule. In 1931 there was scarcely a school to be found worthy of the name anywhere in the Protectorate outside the towns of Lahej and Mukalla. There were Koranic teachers in most of the villages and an elementary education in Arabic for those willing to pay was available in the larger towns from private tutors or the owners of small private schools. [652] [648] By 1956 there were one hundred and ten Primary Boys' Schools, five Primary Girls' Schools, and in addition there were six Intermediate Boys' Schools and one Lower Secondary School, and the States were contributing over £61,000 a year to the Protectorate Education Service while the United Kingdom contributed about £15,000. During the same year the Colony, with a population of 140,000, was spending £250,000 on their nineteen Primary Schools, ten Intermediate Schools and four Secondary Schools, including Aden College and the Technical Institute, but then they were well-to-do and it was their own money and they did not have to go cap in hand to the Treasury.

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875 Still, in spite of everything, the progress was good and the real problem in the Protectorate was not so much the lack of funds to build schools as lack of staff for the schools which had been built and were planned for the future. The Colony had not sufficient good men to staff their own schools and even if men had been available it would not have been possible to pay them an attractive wage without upsetting the wage scales [648] of other State employees and thereby disturbing seriously the economy of the smaller States. Lahej had tried to solve the problem by importing Egyptian teachers, and they could only afford that luxury because the Egyptian Government subsidised this form of propaganda. It was not a policy that any sensible person would advocate, and I was convinced that the Sultan would one day regret bitterly that these political missionaries were ever imported.

The Quaiti State had been able to draw on the Sudan for

teachers to supplement and to train local talent and theirs was 871
a happy choice, but unfortunately when men were wanted for 875
States in the Western Protectorate no more were available. The Sudan could use every competent teacher in her own schools and was disinclined to release men for us even if they had been prepared to come, which was improbable.

The only solution was to make the most of local talent and this was done by Teacher Training Classes organised by the Director of Education in the Colony. The scheme is working well, but the demand for more and more men grows annually as that infectious disease, education, spreads rapidly through the whole of the Protectorate.

I am not writing a textbook and therefore I must keep away 743
from figures as much as possible, but a few cold and concrete 178
facts can often tell a story more clearly than pages of literary effort. This is so in the case of the Health Service. Twenty-five years ago nothing had been done and no real effort was made until after the World War. In 1956 there were five hospitals [652]
with a total of one hundred and ten beds, two of which were [648]
also Health Service Training Centres, and fifty-five Health Units or Dispensaries, as well as three Mission Clinics, and the States were spending at the rate of £28,000 a year compared with the United Kingdom contribution of £33,000 a year. I am afraid it does not sound very much, but it was in fact a tremendous advance. It sounds pitifully small when one realises that at the same time the Colony was spending £250,000 a year on their Health Service, to say nothing of the "Queen Elizabeth II" Hospital which will probably cost a million and a half pounds before it is completed. In fairness, however, it must be stated that the Colony Hospital was open to serious cases from the Protectorate just as the Aden College and Technical Institute had special facilities for Protectorate boys.

For many years the only medical assistance and treatment [648]
that the Protectorate people could obtain was from the Medical Officers of the Royal Air Force, and only then if they were close to a landing ground, and from the staff of the Keith Falconer Mission Hospital at Sheikh Othman who were always willing to travel into the Protectorate to care for the sick. Then

743 178 a few years ago there came into being the Protectorate Health Service which owes much to Dr. N. L. Corkill, M.M., M.S.M., M.D., who came with me to Al Qara. Health Units have been built on standardised lines in all the States where they did not previously exist; and from money contributed by the Fadli and Lower Yafa States, a hospital has been built on the boundary between these two States in a central, though rather windswept, position reasonably easy of access to the people of the Abiyan plain. In Mukalla there is another hospital and up in the Wadi Hadhramaut are two small hospitals at Shibam and Saiyun.

759 The Health Assistants are trained in simple medicine and hygiene at the Fadli-Yafa hospital or in Mukalla and then go to one of the Health Units where, not only do they attend to surgery patients, but also tour the neighbouring villages and are responsible for reporting any outbreak of an infectious disease that may come to their notice to their headquarters in Aden or Mukalla, depending on which part of the Protectorate they are serving.

744 164 Anti-malarial measures and Public Health work are also the responsibility of the Health Service and the decrease in the incidence of malaria and other mosquito and fly-borne diseases since the inception of the Service, is remarkable. At the same time and within the limits imposed by inadequate staff, attention is being paid to the general health of school children with particular emphasis on diseases of the eye. With adequate funds and personnel it would be possible if not to eliminate completely so to reduce trachoma that impaired vision and blindness from this cause would be a rarity rather than, as it still is today, all too common.

743 648 Today, as in the past, the Royal Air Force is always ready to fly Medical Officers into the Protectorate to deal with casualties in inter-tribal scrimmages or to attend to the desperately ill who are beyond the reach or the capacity of the Health Assistants, and there are many tribesmen and women who owe their lives to the Royal Air Force. Stretcher cases from the remotest areas are flown to hospital in Aden and no call for help is ever unanswered because the sender was too humble or

the message was not sent through the proper channels. There is 743 none of that nonsense. Too often are we in the West inclined 648 to connect the Royal Air Force with destruction and death alone, bombing and rocketing and such-like punitive measures, but the tribesman in the Protectorate does not make that mistake. He is only too well aware of the other side of their work—the humane side—which is the least spectacular and seldom achieves the headlines in the daily papers in this country. The tribesman has seen the doctor arrive by air to tend the wounded and the sick, he has seen sick relatives borne off to hospital and he has seen food dropped from 'planes to the starving people in famine areas, and he does not always forget a kindness.

The most humanising and pacifying influence which any 491 administration can exert is to encourage the construction of 648 roads through previously inaccessible territory, and I was very keen on providing the Protectorate with as many good roads as possible, thereby following the excellent example of my predecessors and that great philanthropist Saiyid Sir Abu Bakr Al Kaff, K.B.E. who, at his own expense, to the tune of more than £1,000,000, constructed the first motor road from the Wadi Hadhramaut to Mukalla, thus linking the Wadi directly with the sea for the first time. Later, a second road was constructed farther to the east with funds provided by the Colonial Development Fund, and in the Western Protectorate the Aden-Dhala road was improved and plans made and funds earmarked to build a road from Aden to Beidha in the Yemen via Abiyan and up the great Audhali escarpment, and to improve the existing Aden-Yemen road through Lahej.

It was one thing to plan a road, to find the money for its 489 construction and carry out the actual work, but it was quite 492 another to ensure the safety of travellers along the new road. 493 A lorry can carry several tons and a camel only three hundred pounds, so that one medium-sized lorry was equivalent to more than a dozen camels. Lorries average 20 miles an hour even on a bad road and can travel continuously day and night, while the camel can only manage 2½ miles an hour, and even less when heavily laden, and has to be given adequate rest. The

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

489. The
178 new displacing the old is an inevitable process and provided it
is done at a reasonable pace need not be disturbing and is often
imperceptible. It is the speed of change which matters, and that
is what caused the trouble in the Protectorate. In England the
change from horse-drawn transport to motor transport took
twenty years or more and there was ample time for readjust-
ment. In Aden it took as many days from the time a new major
road was open to motor traffic, and the unemployed camel
men sat nursing their rifles and wondering how to prevent
their animals and themselves from starving. It was not long
before they noticed the weapon in their hands and com-
menced to use it to drive the lorries off the roads. The State
and Political Authorities intervened before too much damage
was done and negotiations resulted in agreements which re-
stricted the use of lorries to named kinds of merchandise, and
so time was gained for readjustment.

[184] The Eastern Aden Protectorate was more affected than the
Western by road development and on more than one occasion
troops had to be used to persuade the camel men and their
friends to be sensible and not to interfere with the lorry traffic
133 which might have had very serious consequences. The Wadi
312 Hadhramaut, that vast cut through the limestone plateau of the
241 Jöl filled with palm groves and white-walled towns, peopled
231 by the most astute and the hardest business men in the world,
441 was subject to droughts which twice in living memory had
731 led to famine: the reason for this had been that the whole
361 irrigation system depended on the availability of bullocks to
134 draw water from the shallow wells and when, during the
droughts, the corn crops had failed, the animals had either to
be fed on seed grain or be left to die of starvation; in the former
case it meant that when the rains did come, there was no seed
to sow, in the latter that there were no animals to draw water.
402 The solution was to eliminate the dependence on bullocks and
177 make available to farmers and date garden owners small diesel
241 pumps with which to irrigate their land. They paid cash for
[432] the pumps if they could, or if they couldn't they put down a
deposit and paid the balance in monthly instalments. A mainten-
ance service, based on a central workshop, which had been set

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up at Saiyun by the Quaiti and Kathiri States, was provided 177
and was controlled by one of Hugh Boustead's young men. 241
Diesel oil was essential for the pumps and it had to be brought from the coast at Mukalla by lorry, and so it was that the camel men, however disgruntled they might be, must not be allowed to damage the roads or impede the oil lorries.

The pump scheme was supplemented by grain stores set up 731
in the main towns and larger villages and regularly inspected 746
to ensure that the grain had been properly rotated. At each harvest new grain was bought and the old grain sold, thus keeping the stocks fresh. Mercifully all went well with the rainfall during my tour of duty and we did not have to put our anti-famine measures to the test.

I cannot leave the subject of development without making 642
a brief reference to the political side. In most States in the 643
Western area of the Protectorate the old form of complete 178
autocratic government has given place to government by the Ruler with the advice of a Council, and in some States the next stage of development of Councils with executive powers has been reached, while in Lahej there is the further refinement of a Legislative Council. Generally speaking these Western innovations where they exist are only in the kindergarten stage and the Ruler is still the central figure upon whose personality the Government of the State really depends. For instance, there is one important State which has no Council at all, but a very able Ruler who governs justly and firmly and whose finances are in a sound condition; while another and larger State has the whole façade of modern governmental institutions but a Ruler whose real interests are elsewhere and his people do not fare so well and the State's finances would mystify the most astute of accountants. The personality of the Ruler is still of paramount importance, but change is coming swiftly.

In the Eastern area the main progress has been made in the centre, where in the Quaiti and Kathiri States administrations have been firmly established and even Town Councils are functioning with reasonable efficiency. These States have been lucky in having Rulers who had the good sense to pay heed to their able advisers. In the two outlying States, the Wahidi

643 on the western side and the Sultanate of Qishen and Socotra on
178 the eastern side, there is rather a different story to tell. The young Wahidi Sultan inherited a country riven by feuds and only recently has any real degree of security prevailed; but he is working on the right lines and has made creditable progress. In Qishen the wild tribesmen wander over their barren desert ranges and sand dunes with their camels and their goats following the all too scarce rain. Oil-survey parties have come to their country and they eye them uneasily, not knowing quite what to make of tractors and caravans, but willing enough to earn money when the opportunity offers and the work is not too strenuous. Down on the coast the Sultan's relatives in the seaboard villages play a Capulet and Montague game in their own Mahra dialect, which they alone can understand, while the Sultan himself, who is inclined to be a recluse, sits in the mountains of his island of Socotra 300 miles away across the sea off the Horn of Africa.

648 While these internal changes have been taking place there has been a change or development in the treaty relations of the major States with Her Majesty's Government. The fundamental agreements, the original protection treaties, have remained unchanged, but these States have entered into an additional treaty of an advisory nature. The Rulers have agreed to accept the Advice of Her Majesty's Government conveyed through the Governor in regard to matters to the benefit of their people and States, and we have undertaken to aid them, in particular, in the economic field, to the best of our ability. These "advisory" treaties are of recent origin and must not be confused, as they often are, with the basic protection treaties, all of which, with one very minor exception, were entered into between 1839 and 1914.

I have seen it suggested that some Rulers were coerced into agreeing to conclude "Advisory" agreements. Nothing could be further from the truth. They were entered into willingly and with full understanding of the obligations on both sides. I can make this statement from my personal knowledge. Far from pressure being used the reverse was the case. In one particular instance I refused to discuss the matter at all with the heir presumptive to an important Sultanate when approached by him. Later, when his claim to succeed his brother had been confirmed by the electoral college he re-opened the matter and a treaty was concluded.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

CHAPTER NINE

Federation and the Future

FEDERATION

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ALTHOUGH the Protectorate Rulers are no longer the despots that they were, they are all, with two exceptions, fundamentally autocratic in their outlook. It is true that in many of the States the powers of the Rulers have been limited to some extent by the voluntary action of the Rulers themselves in establishing Councils, advisory or executive, but it is equally true that the Councils where they exist do so at the will of the Ruler and not at the will of the people. I admit that the autocratic form of government where the autocrat has been of a benevolent disposition, has been, so far, the most successful in the East, and I have much sympathy for those people who deplore the forcing of Western patterns of government on the unwilling Asiatic or African, but so far as Aden is concerned there never has been any question of forcing anything on anyone. I suggest that the reason why autocratic government has been successful in the East is fundamentally because it was the only form of government that could succeed in the insecure conditions which prevailed. It was also the form that the people appreciated, were accustomed to and wanted. They never had any long experience of any other form of government. I am sure that in the very different conditions which now prevail the majority of them do not appreciate a dictator, except as a purely temporary measure. They are growing unaccustomed to autocratic rule and want a form of government approximating to the Western model. What the people want they will have eventually. It is not a question of forcing Western ideas on unwilling people, but rather of guid-

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ing eager purchasers to make a satisfactory choice of a political 643
garment and altering the model to suit their particular figure. 646
It was just with this purpose in view that the Federation plan was conceived.

In all the Western and Middle Eastern countries outside the 642
Iron Curtain, with the exception of the temporary experiment 171
in Egypt and the last remnant of the patriarchal conception in 177
Saudi Arabia, governments are fundamentally democratic whether the head of State be designated Queen, King, or President, and Aden looks Westwards for guidance and inspiration.

The contacts between the nineteenth-century Aden Protec- 642
torate and the West are daily becoming closer. Incessant 177
broadcasts from London, Cairo and Aden itself, very different 648
though they may be in their political approach, bring the modern West and modern Middle East into the remotest villages of the Protectorate. At the same time roads and landing grounds—of the latter there are at least eight with regular Civil Airline services, made possible by better security—have changed the mode of travel from the camel and the donkey to the lorry and the aeroplane and thereby greatly accelerated and increased personal contact with the outside world, and thus with people with Western ideas.

In Aden Colony there are 38,000 Arabs from the Protectorate 641
in close contact with a democratic form of government, many [162]
of whom exercise their voting right when elections to the
Legislative and Municipal Councils take place. These people 642
have become accustomed to a democratic system of govern- 177
ment, not only in Aden, but also in countries in the West to which many of them travel. When they return to their Protectorate homes, which many of them do at frequent intervals, they find the old-fashioned autocratic rule of their Sheikh or Sultan irksome. They would like at home what they have become used to abroad, an ever-increasing say in the government of the country. At present these people are in the minority, but it will not be long before the wish of the few becomes the demand of the majority, and the wisest of the Protectorate Rulers are ready and willing to accept change and bow before the inevitable.

871 178 Another most important factor is education, that menace in the East to tradition, which continues to expand in the Protectorate with ever-increasing speed and threatens to destroy completely the old system before something better ●●○ can be introduced, and all the while the oil survey parties move to and fro. If oil is found there can be but one result. The economic brake on political development will be released and the pressure for change will increase until a really dangerous situation has arisen unless the future has been carefully planned. It is obvious, therefore, and has been for some time, that the present political structure is rapidly becoming out-of-date and cannot continue in this rapidly changing world without danger to the peace and security of the whole area. The problem was, and still is, how best to guide political development into more liberal channels and, if possible, at the same time to improve the economy of the area: the question is how to weld the States together in a powerful, essentially democratic, political and economic entity without disturbing more than necessary the traditional ties between the people and their Rulers and ourselves and both. To put it another way would be to say how to achieve in a few short years what we in this country have taken several hundred years to accomplish. In my view the only answer to this difficult problem was, and is, federation or the gradual joining together of the States into a compact whole, due consideration being given to unequal development in individual States.

842 648 178 I had thought about Federation long before there seemed any possibility that one day I would become Governor, but I was not the first person to put the idea down on paper. The credit for this belongs to Mr. G. K. N. Trevaskis, O.B.E., the Adviser for the Western Protectorate who drafted a scheme for Federation while I was still full of ideas and nothing very concrete. This scheme was discussed by me with my advisers at length, and after alteration and amendment it went to London as a definite proposal. It was approved by the Secretary of State and I was authorised to explain my views to the Rulers and obtain their reactions. Let me state here and now that I am proud of my share in the Federation proposal, in

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spite of the very free and adverse criticism by people far removed from the scene of action and out of touch with recent events in the Protectorate who do not think that it is appropriate or workable. One critic, however, was a notable exception to the general rule and he was in the closest touch; I refer to the Imam of the Yemen, who objected strongly to the scheme for a very different reason. He was afraid that it would work.

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The plan for Federation was simple and to start with envisaged two separate federal structures, one in the West and the other in the East. There were two reasons for this decision; they were—firstly, that generally speaking the standard of administration in the East was very much more advanced than in the West, and secondly, that the Eastern States had always tended to keep to themselves and not to have very much to do with the Western States.

It was proposed that the head of both the federal structures would be the High Commissioner for the Protectorate who would also be the Governor of the Colony. There would be a Council of Rulers in each of the federal areas whose meetings, as a full Council, owing to distance and the preoccupation of members with the affairs of their own States, would probably be few and far between, but each of whom would depute three of their number to represent the full Council as a Working Committee. These Working Committees would be empowered to make decisions on behalf of their Councils and would meet at frequent intervals. It was probable that in the Eastern Federation the Working Committee of the Council of Rulers would, in fact, be the full Council, because it was considered that the Sultanate of Qishen and Socotra had not reached a degree of administrative development which would justify its immediate inclusion in the Federation. It was also proposed to leave out the small village State of Bir Ali because it was really too insignificant to be worthy of serious consideration.

After this novel feature of a Council of Rulers for each area, the pattern became more normal with Executive and Legislative Councils in each federal area whose members would

642 178 be nominated in the first instance. It was realised that eventually the members of the Legislative Councils would be elected, but when precisely that major step forward would be justified would depend on a number of things, not the least of which would be the degree of responsibility shown by the members themselves.

In the beginning it was the intention to make the Federal Authorities responsible only for customs, communications, education and public health; services which lent themselves to central control and which were, with the exception of customs, already subject to a certain degree of direction by advice. It was not intended at this juncture that the Federal Authorities would interfere in any other way with the independent internal authority of the States. When the Federations became firmly established and the advantages of federal control more generally understood, more and more subjects would be transferred to federal control. It was to be a gradual process.

652 648 The Protectorate is a deficit area and, excluding the cost of defence services, costs the British taxpayer about £800,000 a year. This sum includes, among other things, the cost of the Government Guards and the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion and subventions to States to help them maintain their own internal security forces and in certain cases to aid them with the development of State Administrations. It is not really a very large sum being probably less than one pound her head of population a year, but it was clearly undesirable to increase the British
642 652 648 taxpayer's burden unnecessarily. Therefore, the financing of the federal scheme was of primary importance. The centralisation of the customs service was an economic measure which would result not only in a saving in administrative and collection costs, but would make practicable the levy of import and export dues on goods entering and leaving the Protectorate. The saving in administrative cost is obvious when it is realised that one reasonably efficient centrally controlled organisation would replace twenty-five separate organisations, only three or four of which could be described as reasonably efficient. The object of the exercise was not to deprive individual States of their principal source of income and bring them even closer

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to bankruptcy than they were already, but to provide, by saving on administration costs and by levying a realistic export duty on cotton lint, an income sufficient to pay for the Federal Authorities and for subventions to the States to compensate them for their loss of customs revenue. Careful examination of the details of the scheme proved conclusively that it was a practical proposition. At the present time all tobacco, cigarettes and petroleum products imported into the Colony and subsequently exported by land to the Protectorate pay full Colony duty or excise and no drawback is granted. Once the Federal Authorities had been established there was no practical reason why the Colony should not be asked to grant a customs drawback on goods subject to Colony taxation re-exported by land to the Protectorate. This would enable the Federal Authorities to impose their own import duty and increase their revenue without the consumers being adversely affected.

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One further question which required consideration was where the Councils should meet. At least one previous attempt to bring the Western Protectorate States into closer relationship had failed because the meetings between the Rulers had been held in the State of the then most important and advanced Ruler. Prestige and jealousy reared their ugly heads in no time. I did not intend that that mistake should again be made. The obvious place for the Western Federation was the Colony, at any rate, in the beginning until something in the nature of a Canberra could be agreed upon, or brought into being, where accommodation for meetings and for the delegates was available and where inter-State jealousy would be avoided. In the Eastern Protectorate the meetings would have to take place in Mukalla in spite of the very real drawback occasioned by the smaller States' fear of Quaiti domination. There was no alternative; the Colony was too far away even with the improved communications.

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This then was, in brief outline, the Federation scheme which was laid before the Rulers at Government House in January 1954. The meeting was well attended by the Western Protectorate Rulers whose only absentees of note were the Haushabi Sultan, always a trifle weird, who was having a dispute with

642 his neighbour Lahej, and the eccentric Awd bin Saleh, the Upper Aulaki Sultan who could not, at that time, be induced to leave his house in Nisab. Of the Eastern Rulers the Quaiti Sultan was too infirm to attend and the Sultan of Qishen and Socotra was miles away in Socotra. The Resident Adviser in Mukalla had already discussed the scheme in principle with the Quaiti Sultan and found that he was favourably inclined to the proposal.

All the Rulers present at the meeting accepted the scheme in principle, that is the principle of Federation, but very sensibly and rightly they decided that they could not make any pronouncement on the details of the plan until they had had time to study it and if necessary discuss it with their advisers. I was at pains to make it quite clear to them that the present plan was really nothing more than a blueprint. They were the people who were prepared to build the house and I and my officers were the architects and it was our business to meet their wishes in regard to design in so far as it was possible to do so without jeopardising the stability of the whole structure. Negotiations with individual Rulers were started shortly afterwards and initially good progress was made. Some of the States were prepared to accept the plan without alteration, while others asked for only minor and reasonable amendments. At first the prospects were bright for early general agreement, but as the year 1954 advanced so did my hopes recede.

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648 As was anticipated the Yemen reaction was very unfavourable, but I confess I had not expected the Egyptian reaction to be as violent as it was, although the Suez Canal controversy was at its height. They condemned the scheme because it was British and for no other reason, and their radio broadcasts talked of the enslavement of the people and their Rulers and branded the Rulers, who were known to be favourably disposed, as traitors to their country and religion and the friends of infidels. Individual Rulers were mentioned by name and the faint-hearted began to hedge and counsel a postponement until the atmosphere was more conducive to calm consideration.

The Arab League produced a mission which, led by the

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Secretary-General, hurried to the Yemen to consult the Imam. The Yemen was a member of the League so, although the members of the mission, who were intelligent men, were by no means favourably impressed by the Imam's arguments, they felt that they must give him their support. The mission came to see me in Aden and I said I could not understand how they could favour general Federation of the Arab countries, which was then their declared policy, and at the same time condemn the application of the same principles to the Arab States of the Aden Protectorate. We had an amusing talk but did not achieve anything worth while.

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A further set-back came when suggestions were made outside Aden that the States were being forced into the Federation. These suggestions were not taken lightly by any means, although they were quite without foundation in fact. No force was used and no attempt was made to coerce the Rulers who were free to put forward their amendments to the plan, or even to remain outside the Federation altogether if they believed it was to the advantage of their States to do so. In retrospect I think it would have been wiser and to the advantage of the Protectorate as a whole, if the weaklings had been coerced and the Federation become an accomplished fact in 1954. As it was there was a change of policy on our part and the negotiations with the States were discontinued and in order that there could be no possible foundation for any suggestion of force, the proposal was left in abeyance pending a move by the Rulers themselves. So much for the Western States where matters were to rest at this stage for nearly eighteen months.

Meanwhile in the Eastern area, the plan was badly damaged in launching and had to be rebuilt almost from the keel upwards. The Wahidi Sultan, who had declared in favour of federation with the Quaiti and the Kathiri States, wavered and had second thoughts and preferred to federate with the Western States, being somewhat apprehensive of his Quaiti neighbour. Then he had another change of heart or of mind and decided that he would not federate with anyone for the time being. The Wahidi's withdrawal upset the balance in the East, and the Kathiri Sultan whose State is surrounded by Quaiti

642 territory, also had second thoughts and afraid of being overwhelmed by the Quaiti was not prepared alone to join the Federation with his more powerful neighbour.

Then in 1955 some of the Western Protectorate Rulers who favoured Federation began to lose patience and ask why nothing was being done and why the plan seemed to have been shelved. One in particular was very outspoken and said that he was not afraid of the Yemen even if other people were and that pressure should be brought to bear in the general interest on the Rulers who were wavering. Partly as a result of these approaches further consideration was given to the method of approach, and in the latter half of the year another meeting of Rulers was arranged at Government House in Aden.

At this meeting I made it clear that Her Majesty's Government still considered federation to be the right course for the States to pursue, but they did not look upon the original plan, which had been put forward for consideration by the Rulers, as necessarily the only practical solution of the problem. It was hoped that the Rulers would themselves put forward their own plan or plans which would receive very careful consideration. The Rulers made a civil reply to my statement and after an abortive attempt by some of them to form a Working Committee, dispersed back to their States.

So the matter rested in 1956 when I left Aden. The alternative to Federation is a continuance of the present uneconomic fragmentation which will prove fertile soil for political speculators and may result in some not necessarily desirable movement which will be impossible to control.

THE FUTURE

600 I have been asked on many occasions in the past few months how the Protectorate will develop politically and what form our relations with the Rulers will have in the future. It is impossible for me to give a straightforward answer to either of these questions because there are too many imponderables. It has been my unhappy experience that the more I know about a place and the greater my experience of the people, the less

chance there seems to be of my being able to make an accurate forecast of future events. It is possible, however, to consider the main factors which will have an influence on the future of South-west Arabia. They are developments in the Yemen and oil.

The present form of Government in the Yemen is already some centuries out of date and its days are numbered by the years, months, weeks or days left to the present Imam. One thing is quite certain and that is that there will not be any fundamental change during his lifetime provided he retains his mental faculties. When eventually he does depart this earth there would seem to be two alternatives, either a swing of the pendulum away from despotism towards a more liberal form of Government or a continuance of autocratic rule without the present extreme despotism.

In the latter event there will certainly be a considerable improvement in Anglo-Yemen relations, but there will not be any profound and immediate changes in the political structure of the Protectorate other than those resulting from the federation plan which I have outlined, or some amended version of that plan. The improvement in our relations with the Yemen will reduce frontier tension and see the end of the subversive campaign, with the result that both countries will be able to develop side by side in peaceful co-existence. Federation will become a fact.

In the course of time the links between the Colony and the Protectorate will become closer until I expect to see them become politically integrated by mutual consent and with our help and encouragement. The extent to which the whole country became economically viable after integration would depend on the prosperity of the Colony and the agricultural development of the Protectorate; for the moment I am excluding the possibility of oil being found in commercial quantities. Our political relations would have to be adapted then to meet the change and they might well take the form of a High Commissioner with special powers in regard to defence and foreign relations. I visualise that in all other respects the territory would be self-governing with representation on some form

000 of Consultative Committee which I would like to see set up in the United Kingdom to provide for the proper consideration of important questions relating to similar Colonial or Commonwealth territories. I prefer the latter term, which by virtue of their size, geographical situation, or economic condition could not in the foreseeable future expect to be granted full Dominion status.

If the change in the Yemen takes the form of a well-established liberal and democratic Government either in the form of a constitutional monarchy or, indeed, of a republic, which I think unlikely, then there may well be a tendency for some of the Protectorate States in close proximity to the frontier to join their co-religionists and brother Arabs. To what extent such a move should be encouraged or could be prevented will depend on the circumstances then prevailing and would be influenced by the magnitude and sincerity of the movement and our own relations with the Rulers and with the Yemen. It is certain, however, that the achievement of Federation within the Protectorate would militate against any piece-meal hiving off of Protectorate States and would put the Protectorate in a much stronger position *vis-à-vis* the Yemen.

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656 The discovery of oil is the second important factor in the future political development of the Protectorate and the changes which oil would bring about must not be underestimated. At my suggestion negotiations were opened with the States with the object of persuading them to pool, for their mutual benefit, any revenue that might be derived from oil. The allocation of such revenue would be the responsibility of a Board which would be predominantly Arab in composition. At the present time it is not known whether the surface indications will warrant the enormous expenditure without which drilling operations cannot be undertaken, nor is it known in which of the twenty-five States drilling will take place, if and when a decision is made to proceed to this stage of the operation. No State is being asked to share a certainty, but all the States are being asked to safeguard the economic interests of their people. The proposed oil agreement is in itself a form of economic federation, and political federation would follow

closely on the heels of the implementation of the economic 315
bond. It is my view that these negotiations, which were still 656
continuing when I left Aden, should be pressed to a successful conclusion. I use the word "pressed" advisedly because human nature being what it is there may well be selfish and shortsighted Rulers who, with the example of Kuwait, Qatar, and Bahrein before their eyes, would be unwilling to share what is, after all, at this stage only the possibility of potential wealth with their neighbours. It would be intolerable if one or two States became fabulously wealthy while the rest of the Protectorate continued to depend almost for their very existence on the bounty of the United Kingdom taxpayer.

In a startlingly short time after the discovery of oil in 800
commercial quantities, assuming that the revenue therefrom belonged to the Protectorate as a whole and not to individual States, I should expect to see the States federate, if they had not already done so. Then would come further swift political development in a country which would be no less able financially to undertake the responsibilities of Dominion status than is Ghana. Integration with the Colony is an obvious step on the road to Dominion status. Aden, with its magnificent harbour 504
and its 5,000,000-ton Refinery, is the only natural outlet for 382
the oil on the coast of South Arabia, and it is the obvious capital for a future Dominion comprising the present Colony and Protectorate. In June 1933 Sir Samuel Hoare, at that time 000
Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Commons:

> "The reasons which suggest that Aden [he was referring to what is now the Colony] should not remain linked with India under the new constitution are, that it is an area geographically remote from India; that it would not naturally fit into the new federation; that it is already to some extent under Imperial control, *and that it is inseparable in practice from the Aden Protectorate*, which has already passed wholly out of Indian control."

I have never seen any reason to disagree with these words, in particular those which I have italicised, and I have never subscribed to the view that it would be possible or desirable to turn the Colony into a second Gibraltar. Dominion status would be the next logical step after integration with the Colony and it would not be long delayed, but what would happen thereafter is most difficult to predict. Maybe the new Dominion would elect to remain in the Commonwealth, but the possibility of a more fundamental change must not be completely ruled out. There would undoubtedly be a tendency on the part of the Sha'afi districts of the Yemen to adhere to the new Dominion. The strength of this tendency would depend on the political situation in that country.

Whatever development does take place one thing is crystal clear and that is that our future relations with the new Dominion or State will depend on how sensibly we guide and encourage the people and their Rulers during the difficult period of transition from subordination to independence. If we are wise we can look forward to very many years of mutual esteem and respect.

CHAPTER TEN

Yemen Relations and the 1955 Revolt

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THE general trend of our relations with the Yemen must be clear to anyone who has read as far as this, and I do not propose to do more at this final stage than to summarise generally and to try at the same time to remove any misunderstanding which may have arisen.

The federation plan was not the fundamental reason, as the critics of that plan have sometimes suggested, for the disturbed state of our relations with the Yemen. Long before I came to serve in Aden we were on bad terms with the Yemen, in fact, from the time that we entered into treaty relations with the Protectorate States and by so doing became their champion and protector. In 1928, in particular, our relations were strained almost to breaking point, with the Yemen in occupation of the Dhala plateau as well as half the Audhali Sultan's territory. After the 1934 Treaty was signed there was a brief improvement, but gradually the frontier position deteriorated again. In 1948, when the revolution in the Yemen in that year occupied the minds of the ruling family and their rivals to the exclusion of all else, there was, for a few months, peace all along the frontier line. This respite was of short duration and no sooner had the new Imam, Ahmad, secured his throne than the old animosity was resumed with renewed vigour and added bitterness, and in 1952 I was constrained to represent to His Majesty's Government, with all the force at my command, how provocative had grown the Imam's attitude and how disturbed I was at the increased frequency and magnitude of the frontier incidents which were entirely Yemeni inspired.

I do not pretend for one moment that the federation plan

648 did not contribute to a worsening of our already bad relations with the Yemen. There is no doubt that it did. The Imam was alarmed when he saw the scheme accepted in principle by the majority of the Rulers and he expected that practical results would follow the acceptance of the scheme and he visualised the Protectorate becoming, in a very short time, a powerful consolidated country well beyond his grasp and particularly attractive to the Sha'afi majority in his own country. He feared a move on their part to join the Protectorate Federation and saw himself and his Zeidis isolated in the hills of the Northern Yemen and cut off from access to the sea. The Imam said as much to the Secretary-General of the Arab League when he received their mission in Taiz, and his half-brother, His Royal Highness Saif al Islam Abdullah, who was then Foreign Minister, said the same thing to me in 1954 when I went to Taiz to try and improve, by personal contact, Anglo-Yemen relations. I nearly succeeded, but that is another story. The Imam's fear was, of course, quite unjustified because we are precluded by the Treaty of 1934 from any unfriendly act, which a favourable reaction to a Yemeni Sha'afi approach would be, and we still have old-fashioned ideas about the sanctity of Treaties with Foreign Powers. Although I was able to convince the Foreign Minister of our good faith, I made little impression on the great man himself.

The Imam has seen our withdrawal from India, Burma, Ceylon and the Sudan and he is convinced that we will leave Arabia with our task uncompleted and the declaration to the contrary which I made to him personally in Taiz in 1954, which had been made before and has since been made by Ministers of the Crown in London and Aden, did nothing to alter this conviction. Provided, therefore, he can keep the Protectorate undeveloped, economically and socially, and disintegrated politically he feels that he will have no difficulty in stepping into our shoes when the time comes. To this end he maintains his claim to the whole of the Protectorate and the Colony and will hinder to the best of his ability any attempt by us to integrate the States or to develop them socially and economically. As the Qadhi Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami said on

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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one occasion to our Frontier Office during the course of a conversation on frontier relations, "The more uncivilised the Protectorate, the less trouble we shall have when we take over." 648

Our policy is simply re-stated. It is to carry out our obligations to the States of the Protectorate and to maintain friendly relations with the Yemen. It is an admirable one in theory but in the face of the attitude of the present regime in the Yemen well nigh impossible to put into practice. Our primary duty cannot be in doubt: it is to the Rulers and peoples of the Protectorate.

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I cannot leave the subject of the Yemen without giving a short account of the 1955 revolution in that country which, although it had but a temporary effect on our relations with that country, gives an interesting indication of the internal stresses and strains to which the Yemen is subject. The revolution was in part attributable to the Imam's action in 1954 when he declared his son Badr to be the heir apparent and thereby disturbed seriously certain elements in his own family, and in part to his continued harsh treatment of his Sha'afi subjects. The revolt was a curious affair, ill conceived and badly executed. The figurehead was the Imam's half-brother, Abdullah, the Foreign Minister, who though not a very competent Foreign Minister was a pleasant personality and had travelled widely in the Middle East, Europe and the United States of America. I had entertained him in Aden and had conducted the 1954 negotiations with him in Taiz and I know that the final and dramatic break-down of those negotiations was as disappointing to him as it was to me. He was genuine in his wish to see better relations between our two countries and was far more realistic and broadminded in his attitude to the Protectorate than the Imam.

The revolution started well, from the point of view of the rebels, and Abdullah seized control of Taiz, the *de facto* capital, and imprisoned the Imam in the Old Guest House, where I had stayed on my first visit to the Yemen in 1934, opposite to the Foreign Ministry which was, not unnaturally, the revolutionary headquarters. The plan seems to have been to seize the person of the Imam who would then be persuaded to abdicate

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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669 and would leave the country after having called on all and 643 sundry to be loyal to the new Imam. Where precisely he would go had not been considered, nor was anyone very clear what would be done if he refused to abdicate. He had been ill for some time and I have little doubt that the rebels thought that in his weakened state he would offer little resistance and consider himself lucky to escape with his life. How little they really knew the man. He refused to agree to the rebel demand and Abdullah, who besides being a humane man, did not want to make the same mistake that had been made in 1948, was unwilling to put an end to him until every effort to persuade him to abdicate had proved unavailing. To this end prominent citizens from Taiz and elsewhere were induced to go to the Old Guest House and try and persuade the royal prisoner to be sensible and not force the rebels to a desperate act. Among those who made this short journey from the town was the Qadhi Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami who was on a visit to Taiz and was staying in the New Guest House close by the British Legation building. The old gentleman was seen being conducted up the road to the Old Guest House by an escort of soldiers who were not, on this occasion, present to enhance his dignity. The Qadhi saw the Imam and at once advised him to submit and abdicate. It seems the Imam was furious and gave Ash Shami his views on his, Ash Shami's, personal character with his usual vigour and lack of restraint. The Qadhi was unmoved and remained outwardly his usual calm, collected, and dignified self until the storm had passed, and then he pointed out to the Imam that if he had given him any other advice he, Ash Shami, would not have lived very long and that if he, the Imam, did not accept the advice he had given him his own hours were certainly numbered. It was better, Ash Shami suggested, to submit when there was really no alternative and wait patiently for the wind to change. Having given his advice he drifted slowly down the road again with his guard back to the New Guest House. A few days later when the Imam had abdicated and Abdullah had been proclaimed as his successor, Ash Shami was allowed to go to Ibb where he remained until the restoration, "sleeping like the old fox

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML1
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he is" as one leading Yemeni in Aden said to me at the time.

There was another important guest in the New Guest House with Ash Shami at this time. He was another of the Imam's half-brothers, His Royal Highness Saif al Islam Qasim, a stout gentleman with an appreciation of good cooking, who was Minister of Education, or Communications—I am sure he never knew precisely which himself. His sole interest was in the culinary art and he was otherwise very detached from worldly affairs. His presence in the New Guest House was not directly due to the political upheaval. He had obtained Royal permission to fly to Egypt—ostensibly for medical treatment, the usual excuse of the royal brothers when they wanted a holiday abroad in civilised surroundings—and his 'plane had been grounded by the rebels. He wandered impatiently about the building complaining:

"Why don't they settle this business? I am being put to great inconvenience and the food in this place is quite uneatable."

That one of his brothers had imprisoned the other and that he himself was in the very midst of a bloody revolution did not seem to weigh very heavily on him.

The news of the abdication of the Imam on the grounds of ill health and the accession of Abdullah was telegraphed to all parts of the Yemen and all provincial officials were called upon to give their allegiance to the new Imam. Most of them had seen revolutions go wrong before and by now they knew that Ahmad's son, the heir-apparent Badr, had escaped the rebels' net and was at large, so they decided to make no reply and carry on with their work until the picture became clearer before committing themselves to one side or the other.

Badr was very much alive and had made for Hajja, there to collect a force with which he intended to march on Taiz to rescue his father. Meanwhile Ahmad had become an embarrassment to his captors who did not know what to do with him or where to send him, and he showed no inclination to solve their problem for them by committing suicide. The rebels, much preoccupied with the future about which they did not seem at any time to have been very clear, grew careless. The

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden
Yemen ML1

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strict guard on the Old Guest House was relaxed, a point which did not escape Ahmad's notice. To make matters worse for the rebel leaders the Army Units in Taiz, upon which they depended for their military force, showed signs of wavering. The old man was still in Taiz and that in itself was disturbing to the soldiers who feared rather than hated him, and the rumours of Badr's advance with an overwhelming force of tribesmen which gained strength almost hourly were far from encouraging. Abdullah and the Army leaders dithered, disheartened by the lukewarm response from the provinces to the news of the setting up of the new regime.

Then one morning Ahmad solved everyone's problems by seizing a Bren gun from a careless guard and personally, with his usual indomitable courage, overwhelming his captors. The Army changed sides, not without some relief, and though the next few hours were confused, by the end of the day Ahmad had withdrawn his abdication, resumed his throne, and brother Abdullah was safely locked up, together with those of the ringleaders who had left their departure for Aden too late.

His Royal Highness Saif al Islam Abbas, who was Abdullah's full brother and who had supported Ahmad in the 1948 revolution, made a demonstration at Sana in Abdullah's favour but was overwhelmed by Government forces and captured. A few days after Ahmad had regained his throne, Abbas and Abdullah both suffered the usual fate of all unsuccessful rebel leaders. They were executed in the fortress at Hajja.

Ash Shami was not, as might have been expected, among those who died in the barbaric and disgusting public executions in Taiz which followed the restoration. The Imam sent an escort of soldiers to bring him to Taiz from Ibb and accused him of having sided with the rebels. His reply to the charge was something like this:

"I advised you, my master, to wait for the wind to change. You could do that only by abdicating, you abdicated, and the wind has changed."

He returned to the New Guest House with his soldiers, this time as an honourable escort and very soon after resumed his

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MMI
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old appointment in Beidha with enhanced authority and the empty title of Minister of State.

The revolution was over. The Imam had lost two more brothers and the blood letting had cooled temporarily the fevered Yemen. Anglo-Yemen relations returned to the normal pitch of strain within a few weeks and I was at the airport in Aden to welcome His Royal Highness Saif al Islam Hassan, the Imam's eldest brother and Prime Minister of the Yemen, who was on his way by air from Cairo to attend the Bandung Conference. Although Hassan had been a tower of strength to his brother during the 1948 rebellion, he had never been on really friendly terms with him and their relations had become distinctly strained after the recognition of Badr as Crown Prince. He had been in Cairo during the recent revolt and his part, if any, in that affair has never been made clear, but shortly after Bandung he was relieved of his office of Prime Minister and sent to New York to represent the Yemen at the United Nations. He has never been back to his own country where his sons are still kept under surveillance.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Labour Relations in the Colony

466 ONE of the problems with which I had to deal and the one which I, personally, found the most difficult and more of a strain than all the bickerings and scufflings in the Protectorate and the continual worry of strained relations with the Yemen, was labour relations in the Colony. To understand the problem a very brief sketch is essential of the history of labour from the time that we first arrived in Aden until the immediate post-war period.

175 The invaders of Aden in 1839 came from India and brought
563 with them Indian clerks and a few Indian artisans, and they
464 not unnaturally looked to India for their future supply of
167 skilled and semi-skilled labour. The local Arab was, by Indian standards, totally uneducated and seemed unlikely to take kindly to education, even if it was worth while for some effort to be made in that direction. The local article being thought unworthy of serious consideration, the practice of importing artisans and clerks from India to meet the ever-expanding demand for such workers, became the normal method of recruitment. Gradually a tradition was built up that the Arab would never be capable of skilled work and that such work was an Indian prerogative. The Indians themselves, short-sightedly, did nothing to discourage the belief.

This dangerous state of affairs persisted until after the World
563 War, partly because the Arabs remained uneducated and partly
464 because the Indians were good workmen and their European
178 masters did not wish for any change. Then the education of the Arabs was taken in hand seriously and they responded in a way which surprised even their most fervent champions. They

soon showed that they could be educated, that they were 563
capable of doing more than just manual labour and that with 464
understanding and encouragement there was very little that 178
was beyond their capabilities. They began to resent the presence in their midst of an army of Indian clerks and artisans doing work which, not always with justification at that time, they considered they were capable of doing and which should be theirs by right. Unfortunately, this resentment was not confined to the Indian workers, but was directed as well against their European employers which did not make for happy racial or labour relations in the future.

The general condition of Arab labour in the Colony when I 563
first came to know Aden in the nineteen-thirties can only be 465
described as disgraceful. There were no superannuation benefits, 466
and as wages left no margin between income and expenditure, nothing could be saved against old age and sickness. There [362]
were no holidays with pay, and most workers had to find their [744]
own living accommodation, and the vast majority received no medical treatment or benefit through their employers. Labour relations, as we now understand that term, did not exist. There was no form of consultation between master and man and the authority of the master was absolute.

Coal and cargo coolies were provided with accommodation; 466
they were housed in long sheds, owned by the coaling and 362
stevedoring companies, in grossly overcrowded conditions without any washing or sanitary arrangements, the nearby beach just across the main road served as a combined bath and lavatory. The owners never had the smallest idea who lived in these dormitories and what went on there after dark, which was probably just as well for their peace of mind in this town where women were closely guarded and youth was uncontrolled.

By the end of the World War no very great improvement in 178
conditions was noticeable and the housing shortage, already 362
acute, was rendered more so by a Town Planning Scheme which virtually paralysed all building operations for two years, and achieved little else except an impracticable scheme which was brought into force in a modified form and then,

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362 mercifully, abandoned. The post-war increase in Aden's trade
464 brought more and more skilled and unskilled workers into the Colony, until the unsatisfactory overcrowding, at one time confined to the poorer elements of the population, had spread to white collared workers and highly skilled labour. Key money was illegal but no heed was paid to the law and very few houses changed tenants without it being given and taken in some form or other.

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466 When I came to the Port Trust I set myself to improving the standard of living of the employees and modernising their terms of employment. Government also was striving to improve labour conditions, and in the nineteen-forties a minimum wage ordinance for unskilled daily paid workers passed the Legislative Council and became law. The problems of overtime rates, juvenile employment and maximum hours of work and [362] many kindred subjects were studied and ordinances were drafted to provide very necessary legislation. At the same time a Housing Committee was set up under the Director of Public Works to tackle the housing shortage problem. Meanwhile we in the Port Trust decasualised as much of our labour as we [657] could and Government followed suit with theirs, an example to business houses which they were in no hurry to follow. I introduced a families' medical scheme with a lady doctor in charge for Port Trust employees, which was immediately successful and which I have no doubt Government would have [465] liked to have seen become Colony-wide; but it was not to be, there were too many difficulties. Some of the more enterprising commercial houses introduced superannuation schemes and medical benefit for their employees, and by 1954 annual leave on full pay had become the rule rather than the exception. It is extraordinary how quickly a lead is followed, and in a few short years after the war progress was made which in many countries has taken a life-time. The speed with which *these concessions were granted upset the equilibrium* of some workers who, anxious to make hay while the sun shone, began to demand more and more, well beyond their just entitlement, but on the whole labour behaved surprisingly well and there was only one serious industrial disagreement during this

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period. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company's bunkering and 466
installation workers went on strike without serious conse- [468]
quences to anyone. Our really bad labour trouble was to come later.

Government set up a Labour and Welfare Department, and 657
labour ordinances which had lain unenforced for years were 466
brought into reality, much to the disgust of some factory 178
owners whose premises were a danger to their employees and a disgrace to the Colony. So the progress went on, first one problem was tackled and then another, but I believe the working people derived most benefit from the housing schemes which
were introduced. The Port Trust led the way in this field with 657
a bold scheme to house the majority of their permanent labour 362
force. I was glad to have been able to initiate that scheme, and I was even better pleased before I left Aden in 1956 to see completed the Government housing scheme at Ma'alla where 1,500 flats had been erected on a very modern housing estate planned primarily for Government employees. Even housing, like the measles, is catching and the major commercial undertakings followed the lead given them and it became usual rather than unusual for most permanent employees to be housed by their employers.

While all this building was going on in Tawahi and Crater, the outskirts of the Colony were not forgotten and Government erected over 1,000 houses at Sheikh Othman to relieve overcrowding.

This is not meant to be just a list of the achievements of Government and employers in the labour field, but an indication of the all-round efforts which were made in a comparatively short space of time to improve the working conditions and the housing of the workers in the Colony, especially
those who were the least well provided for financially. All 466
this activity, beneficial though it was, failed in one vital respect. Only in a few exceptional cases was there any real improvement in master and man relations. The employers remained out of touch with their men just when the closest co-operation and understanding was essential. They took little interest in their employees as individuals either inside the

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factory or office or in their homes, and there was a sad lack of 468 mutual respect, understanding and consultation. Negotiating machinery in industry, as we understand it in this country, did not exist and efforts made during the first years of my term of office as Governor to persuade Managements to modernise their outlook were largely unavailing. The employers had 467 no federation or co-ordinating authority for their labour relations and labour was leaderless. Up to 1952 there was only one Trade Union in the Colony. Then suddenly Trades Union became fashionable and everyone wanted to have these new toys, with the result that by March 1956 some twenty-five Unions had been registered, the majority of whom had been in existence for only a few months. The Trades Union leaders were mostly young men and were, without exception, inexperienced and in some cases more interested in power than they were in the proper functioning of the Unions. The Unions were mostly House Unions and in their dealings with Managements their leaders often behaved in an ill-mannered and provocative manner and conducted themselves generally like people with an inferiority complex rather out of their depth, which is precisely what they were. One thing the Union leaders had no doubt about was that they would not hesitate to make full use of their new authority. They had not long to wait. At this time strikes were very much in the air literally, with news of labour unrest a feature of practically every radio news broadcast, blared forth in the Colony eating houses and coffee shops. The atmosphere was certainly conducive to strikes, and I am afraid that many of the Trades Union leaders did not view the possibility of their advent with that concern, and indeed dismay, which they would have had they been more experienced and responsible. They had all got their toys and maybe some of the children wanted to wind them up and see what would happen.

468 The employers, on the other hand, were inexperienced in
466 dealing with Trades Union and resented, often with cause, the
attitude of the Trades Union officials. With the exception of
[479] the "Shipping Conference" which was composed of representatives of the shipping companies and was mainly concerned

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with freight rates and stevedoring charges, the employers were 468 disorganised and were, for the most part, in active competition [474] with each other. They were very conscious of the considerable [477] improvements in living and working conditions which had been made by them and they felt that they were entitled to expect, if not the gratitude of their workmen, at least a period of industrial calm free from further demands. They were alarmed at the increase in the number of the Trades Union, which meant only one thing to them and that was more and more and bigger and bigger demands by labour until commercial life became impossible. It seemed quite clear to the majority of the employers that the Unions would have to be fought and brought to their senses or broken, and that this must be done before they became too strong.

Although the continued anti-British broadcasts from Cairo 466 had undoubtedly had their effect on the general atmosphere in the Colony, which the activities of the nationalist National United Front Party had done nothing to improve, labour as a whole was behaving reasonably well. There were, of course, some differences of opinion between individuals and Managements, but the two main labour problems were being dealt with. 466 The first of these problems, which was not in any way extraordinary 465 and concerned shift rates for stevedores, was under discussion between employers and the Labour Department of Government, and a satisfactory settlement was in sight. 468 The second problem was out of the ordinary and was a direct result of the improved housing conditions which many 362 workmen now enjoyed. 511 Put simply the trouble was that the provision of better and modern housing had increased the cost of living of the occupants to a point where, on their wage scales, they could not make both ends meet and were distinctly worse off financially than they had been before the new houses and flats were available. The reason for this curious state of affairs was not increased rent, because although there had been an increase it had been cushioned by subsidisation by Government, the Refinery, the Port Trust and the commercial houses which provided housing for their employees. Previously many of the workmen concerned had been living three or four families

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362 together in one room, or verandah, or in a scrap-wood and
511 corrugated iron hut on the hillside. They had no washing facilities and used public latrines, and when the kerosene oil in the lamp was exhausted they went to sleep. The new accommodation had running water laid on, a bathroom and water-borne sanitation and electric light. This was as it should be, but this was where the trouble arose because water and electricity in Aden had both to be paid for, and investigation showed that the provision of these necessities increased the workman's monthly expenditure by fifteen per cent. There was also some social rivalry among the families and trying to live up to the Joneses never does reduce expenditure.

511 Yet another cause of increased expenditure, which was uni-
871 versal and did not apply specifically to the dwellers in the new houses and flats, was that more children were going to school. In 1921 there were 359 boys in Government schools, by 1948 this had increased to 4,000 boys and girls, and by 1956 no less than 10,000 children were attending Government schools and many more were going to other educational establishments. Primary and Intermediate education were free and even at Aden College and the Technical Institute the boys of poor parents were able to continue their education with Government scholarships, so the trouble was not with school fees. The parents' financial burden was added to because the boys and the girls had to be decently dressed in clean clothes to go to school, instead of wearing any old thing to hang about the town in or run errands.

408 The Aden Government and the Refinery Management
(465) were alive to the difficulties of their employees and we and they were taking steps to solve the problem by a revision of some of the wage scales to relieve the financial pressure on the less well paid men. If our plans could have been completed before an unfortunate dispute between a Management and Trades Union officials lighted the fuse to set off a chain of strikes, which were exploited by the National United Front for their own ends, it is probable that the trouble when it came, and come it probably would have done in the atmosphere then prevailing in the Colony, would have been quite limited

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

in its extent and the Refinery would not have been directly 468 involved. As it was there was general confusion, with neither side acting rationally. Labour relations, never good, became chaotic with the employers determined to fight anything in the nature of a demand, however reasonable it might be; and many of the Union leaders were equally determined to have a strike, unjustified though it might be. Members of some Unions were brought out on strike before any demands had been put forward by the leaders to the Managements concerned and without any clear idea of why they were striking.

The only measure of agreement there was between the two 664 parties was their condemnation of the conduct of my Govern- 466 ment. One side, I leave you to guess which, said that the whole 468 trouble was Communist inspired, or if not actually Commun- 641 ist then the work of the Nationalists which was much the same thing, and anyway the strikes were purely political in cause and conduct, and were not in any way industrial. In their view Government were dreadfully weak and lamentably biased and were doing nothing when they should have been deporting the rascally political leaders disguised as Trades Union officials. They had a great deal more to say, but it all amounted to one thing, that Government was gravely at fault. The opposite party was just as outspoken and did not hesitate to describe Government officials as harsh and the police as overbearing and tyrannical and, in fact, murderers. In their view the workmen were grossly oppressed and there was a distressing lack of sympathy for the downtrodden and so on and so forth. They considered that Government should force the employers to grant every single Union demand, reasonable or unreasonable, simply because it was a Trades Union demand.

In fact, of course, we did everything we could to prevent 468 the strikes and to stop them spreading when once they started. The Labour Commissioner worked day and night to bring the parties together and try and solve their difficulties which were, whatever anyone may say, fundamentally industrial in origin. I, myself, met both sides time and time again, but 579 to no avail. They were beyond rational thought.

At the same time the first essential was to maintain law and 689

579 689 order in the Colony, and this was done with the minimum of force by the police supported by the military forces in the Colony. The fact that on two occasions the police were forced to open fire on rioters indicates how serious the situation was. It also indicates our determination to let nothing hinder us in the execution of our duty. Mercifully there were only two or three casualties, one of whom was a schoolboy who was killed by a stray shot while watching a crowd being prevented from storming the Tawahi Police Station in order to release a workman who, very properly, had been arrested. It was a tragic business. Some innocent person almost inevitably suffers on these occasions. I was, by chance, in Tawahi when the boy's funeral procession passed along the road and after it had gone by an elderly man, an Arab, walked up to me and said:

"You are responsible. It was murder."

Emotion had distorted his judgment, poor fellow, and I mention the incident only to indicate the unreasonableness that prevailed.

468 The Refinery Management kept their heads and showed good sense, as did some of the leading members of the Aden Trades Union Congress, several of whom worked indefatiguably to end the strikes. Without their help and understanding things would have been very much worse. As it was, normal conditions at the Refinery were restored in a comparatively short space of time, and then the pieces all fell into place again and the strikes were over, except in one or two cases where one side or the other was particularly stupid and unyielding.

625 In my opinion it was the Civil and Military security forces who came best out of this sorry affair. They were firm at the right time and lenient at the right time and their patience was admirable at all times. It was due to them that the situation did not become very much worse. It is only right that I should say so and that they should receive a few halfpence when they deserve them—they get enough kicks when they don't.

468 466 I ordered a Commission to be set up to inquire into the cause of the strikes and to make recommendations for the

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future. The Commission was composed of the Attorney-General who presided, the President of the Chamber of Commerce, a European both knowledgeable and far-sighted, two influential Arab members of the Legislative Council, a Trade Union official from the only Union that did not take any part in the strikes, and Mr. James Young, the well-known British Trade Unionist, who was selected by the Trades Union Congress in London in response to a request from us, and who flew out to Aden. Aden owes a considerable debt of gratitude to Mr. Young. The verdict of the Commission was that the strikes were basically industrial in origin but that one political party had done their utmost to exploit them for their own purposes.

The young Trades Union must learn to keep politics in their proper place which, in my view, should be outside the Union, and at the same time to be more responsible in their words and deeds. The employers must be more patient and more adaptable to the changing world about them. Patience, sympathy and common sense is the right mixture for both sides and should be prescribed in large doses. If it is taken regularly there will not be any serious labour trouble in Aden.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

The Majority Community and Political Parties

563 THE Arab community can be divided into four groups; the descendants of the original inhabitants and others who have become in a true sense Aden Arabs by birth and descent from established immigrants; the Hadhramis; the Protectorate Arabs; and the Yemenis.

The first group are permanent residents and among them are many of Aden's leading families, the Aidroos, the custodians of the great Aidroos Mosque whose origin is Iraqi and who came to Aden very many years ago via the Wadi Hadhramaut, the Mackawwis whose name shows their Meccan origin, the Safis, Girgirahs, and the Maktaris of Yemeni origin, the Hamoodis and Luqmans now identified with the Arabs who are of Persian and Indian descent and the Bayoomis and Khalifahs, two well-known Aden families of Egyptian origin. There was at one time an Egyptian quarter in Crater. Before the turn of the last century the present Hafat Husein was known as the Hafat al Misri.

In the first group are to be found merchants of standing, lawyers and newspaper proprietors, shop-keepers and cinema owners, fishermen and labourers and artisans, in fact every profession and calling under the sun. They are the backbone of the Colony and by and large the moderates in the political field. The second group are in much the same position as the Europeans, they are in Aden for what they can get out of the place and their thoughts are concentrated on making money to the exclusion of all else, except their beloved Hadhramaut to which they return from time to time. They are almost without exception merchants or are employed in business

563 houses. They are clannish and only of recent years have any of them taken any part in the public life of the Colony. The exception to this statement is the Bazara family, members of which have in the past and today given their services to the public in the municipal field and in the field of sport.

The third group are in much the same position as the Hadhramis, but being nearer home they pay more frequent visits to the Protectorate, and not having the Hadhramis business astuteness they are to be found more among the employees than the employers. They are of a generous disposition, and now that the educational disadvantage from which they suffered is fast disappearing, they are playing an ever increasing part in the life of the Colony.

The last group, the Yemenis, are a problem and fall clearly into two divisions, the manual workers who spend only a few months in the Colony at any one time and have in no way severed their ties with their homeland and the merchant class who may have become assimilated into the first group or are on the way to and wishful of being so, or who may have come to Aden because they are Sha'afis, or cautious persons and who, while not giving up their Yemen connection and business interests in any way, want to have an alternative source of income and place of residence in the event of trouble in their own land.

[665] This then is the majority community in the Colony, and it is from this community that the political parties have been evolved with some assistance in their early days from individual members of the minority communities, and the Cairo radio in more recent times.

665 Political parties came into being in Aden in much the same way as they have done in other parts of the world. People of similar views or recreations or occupations met together in the coffee shops and eventually had the idea of forming a Club. The Club became in time the resort of people with, broadly speaking, the same political ideas and so a Party was formed.

595 Aden has dozens of Clubs, but mercifully very few political Parties. Most of the Clubs are mushroom affairs that suddenly spring up over night all complete with President, Chairman,

a Secretary, a Committee, and a small back room down some side street and up two flights of stairs which serves as the Club premises. The rules and objects are presented to the District Commissioner who is asked to permit the Club to be registered according to the law. The rules are fool-proof, having been copied from those of a Club which has already been registered, and the objects are very high-minded. The Club is said to be cultural in the strict sense of the word and has no other purpose than the raising of the cultural level of the members through social intercourse. Complete stuff and nonsense, of course, but as no-one knows anything against the Management Committee, registration is granted, a few chairs are moved into the back room, a youth is hired to run out for cups of tea from the tea shop on the street corner and the Club has come into being.

As a rule these Clubs continue for just so long as the Honorary Treasurer remains honorary. When he decides that his duties are sufficiently onerous to deserve something more than the cultural uplift he no doubt derives from the Club's social activities and disappears with the funds, the Club ceases to function for all practical purposes. The individual members take as much of the furniture away as they can lay their hands on before the landlord hears the news and seizes it as security for his rent which the Treasurer has failed to pay before he left. The only trace of the Club remaining is a notice-board in Arabic and English which clings to the wall of the house—the scene of the Club's brief life—and the entry in the District Commissioner's Register of Clubs and Societies which records the birth of, say, "The Rabizi Cultural and Social and Charitable Club". The Rabizi's culture was at its peak in 2000 B.C., and has been deteriorating steadily ever since. No-one in their part of the Protectorate would think of going to a party without taking a rifle as well as a dagger, and, if the host lives some way away, without ensuring that a Saiyid is with the party. No-one will harm a Saiyid if they can help it.

As regards the charitable side of the Club's activities, we have already seen that at least one member of the Committee took steps to see that that was not neglected and that the

charity was directed into the right channel. There are excep- 575
tions, of course, and some Clubs have thrived and developed
into very worth-while organisations which are indeed cultural
and social. Often they combine their social activities with
tennis or football or hockey, and these latter Clubs have done
a very great deal of good. The Football Clubs are subject to [526]
the control of the Aden Sports Association, a purely unofficial
organisation which came into being years ago as the Aden
Football Association to control and encourage football in the
Colony. It has fulfilled its purpose. Nowadays the existing
Clubs of standing are mainly non-political; by which I do not
mean that politics are not discussed—they certainly are—but
that either the Club did not start as a political meeting place
or that its main purpose is no longer political.

There are only three political parties in Aden. There never 665
have been any more and originally there was only one, the 575
Muslim Association. This organisation was inclined to be Pan-Islamic in outlook, which was not surprising because its moving spirit was for a long time an able and successful lawyer from Pakistan. Unfortunately for the Muslim Association the lawyer in question died in London when on his first visit to this country. After his death the Association lost most of its drive and has, from a political angle, become merged in the Aden Association.

The Aden Association is the main political party and is 665
composed of the moderates. It came into being from the political side of the Muslim Association and the more mature of the Arab political leaders. By the middle of 1956 it was a comparatively well organised body whose political platform was, broadly speaking, internal self-government for the Colony. Up till then it had kept an open mind on the question of union between the Colony and the Protectorate. Some of the members would undoubtedly have liked to see some form of union, but I doubt if any of them would have been prepared to commit themselves publicly to a definite policy of union. They preferred to wait and see how the Protectorate developed both politically and economically before making any definite pronouncement. They are only too well aware

665 [652] They[1] are only too Aden well aware that while the Colony has an income of nearly four million pounds a year and pays its way with a high standard of educational and social development, the Protectorate with at least six times the population and twelve hundred times the area, has a possible income of about half a million pounds a year and would be unable without the annual subvention from Her Majesty's Government to maintain the very indifferent educational and social standard at present existing. This leaves out of all account the cost of maintaining security in the area and the heavy expenditure on frontier watch and ward. At present any union between the Colony and the Protectorate could not be described as an attractive business proposition, and the Aden Association has a number of shrewd business men among its members. The Aden Association has three elected members on the Legislative Council, all of them Arabs, and one other member of the Council (who is a Hindu) may be described as a collateral of the Association if he is not, in fact, a member which he may well be. My personal knowledge does not go beyond 1956 and by this time there may well have been some realignment among the Council members.

The next Party deserving of consideration is the South Arabian League which originally advocated union between the Colony and the Protectorate. It was never very strong and its policy was never very clearly defined. Unlike the Aden Association and that organisation's parent, the Muslim Association, it had some rather nebulous connection with the States bordering the Colony. Two or three years ago their platform underwent a fundamental change when some members began to advocate union with the Yemen as well as with the Protectorate, with the result that the more stable elements broke away and became independents.

The third Party is the National United Front whose stated policy is union with the Protectorate, the Yemen and the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman and the setting up of a South Arabian Independent State. This party is an amalgamation of the Nationalists who insist on independence and will be content with nothing less, the left wing of the South Arabian League and a few Free Yemenis who work for a more liberal form

[1] [i.e., the Aden Association—Analyst]

of government in their own country, the Yemen. The Free Yemenis were the back-bone of the 1948 revolution in that country. They feel that the removal of the Hamid-Ud-din dynasty from the throne of the Yemen and the substitution of a democratic, largely Sha'afi, form of government will remove the principal obstacle to eventual union between the two big South-west Arabian territories.

Where precisely the Sultan of Muscat comes into this picture is as much a mystery to me as it must be to his Highness who has probably never heard of the National United Front and would be quite unimpressed if he ever does become aware of its existence.

The Front has active members in the Protectorate, in particular in the State of Lahej, but is not quite as united as it used to be, as there has recently been a difference of opinion among the leaders on the important question of the banning of the importation of Qāt into the Colony. The leaders of the Front compare very badly with those of the Aden Association and their methods are not such as would commend their party to responsible people, though there is no doubt that they have a following among some sections of the Yemeni labour in the Colony and the more unstable elements of the local population. Nasser of Egypt has much the same support in the Cairo mob elements, and kind calls to kind on the Cairo radio. They are the only Party which has tried to make political capital out of strained labour relations, and there is no doubt that in the spring of 1956 they made a serious attempt to obtain control of the Trades Union. They failed then because the Trades Union leaders, though some of them were members of the Front, realised the danger to the Unions and refused to become subordinate to the leaders of the Front. I hope the danger of labour being so badly and fatally misled is now past and as experience is gained by the Trades Union leaders they will become even more unwilling in future, than they were in 1956, to become the pawns of any political party. Their primary role is in the field of labour relations and not in the political arena.

What it amounts to is that there are, in fact, two main

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political parties, both of whom advocate self-government. The Aden Association at present limit their demands to a degree of internal self-government, waiting to see what developments take place in the Protectorate in the future. They will try and get as much as possible, but they are not unreasonable, and common sense is not lacking in their leaders. The National United Front want complete independence and amalgamation with the Protectorate and the Yemen. They lack common sense and their leaders are irresponsible demagogues. Thus both Parties advocate independence in one form or another; the children are growing up.

000 Nationalism is to many Britons much the same as rebellion. They don't understand it and they treat Nationalists as they would treat people suffering from some disagreeable contagious disease. They feel that they are a danger to their fellows and therefore must be restrained if they cannot be cured. Many of us are inclined to behave like Victorian parents with rebellious children and have little or no sympathy with those who aspire to be independent. It is a pity but the attitude is understandable. We were last invaded nine hundred years ago and have long forgotten what it is like to be subordinate to a foreign power.

It is true to say that we have treated our subordinate territories well, in some cases, even generously, but that is not everything. They, all of them, yearn to be on their own, to be their own masters, and we, like an indulgent parent with a precocious child, are hurt, angry and mystified by their behaviour. It would be better for our future relations with these territories if we had suffered the indignity of foreign rule in more recent years and could call on our own experience for the key to what is to so many of us a mystery. Nationalism is not something new, something primarily anti-British nurtured in the Middle East and spread like a plague throughout the Colonies. It is something very natural and something which, in a different form, most of us have experienced personally ourselves. It is the desire of adolescence to stand alone, to make a break with the parental roof and be independent of parental control. We broke away from our father's house when we grew up, and our children will do precisely the same, when they grow up. It is inevitable and the sensible parent helps and encourages the young people to make their own way in the world; helps with advice, by example and often with financial backing. It is the attitude of the parents at this critical stage in family relations which will determine the nature of the after relations between the children and their parents. Too strict a control will bring resentment which in extreme cases may result in the severance of all relations. Too indulgent an attitude may bring disaster to the children and to the family. There can be no fixed rule in these matters because just as no two children are precisely the same, no two Colonies are exactly alike. Some Colonies develop early, some are backward, some are headstrong and must be restrained, while others need encouragement. It is a most difficult decision for any parent to make, when precisely to relax control and to what extent. It is, at the same time, a very important decision, probably the most important that has to be made in the life of a Colony or of a young man or woman. If the right decision is made, the future relations between the parties will be mutual respect and, indeed, admiration.

In all big families, and the family of nations and peoples which makes up our Commonwealth is big enough in all conscience, there will be one or two doubtful characters, and there must be occasional family quarrels. Some may go off and flirt with undesirable acquaintances; others may have financial difficulties, and get into deep water; yet others may have disagreements among themselves and with their parent. It is only natural, but if the relations between parent and children and in the family generally are what they should be, the wanderers and the scamps will come home again, the bickering will cease, and in time of trouble you may be certain that the whole family will face the world united, bound by inseparable ties of kinship.

In one respect the younger and smaller members of the Commonwealth are at a disadvantage, a very serious disadvantage, because they, like the children of divorced parents, are never quite sure in whose custody they are going to be. The Judge, which in this case is the British Constitution, made no precise order on this point. Sometimes they are with one parent for five years, sometimes for longer and sometimes for only a few months. The two parents are very different in character; one is over indulgent and encourages the children to hope for too much too early and feeds them on unsuitable and indigestible things, while the other is, possibly, too Victorian and lacks understanding of young things. Mercifully for both parents and children there are reasonably competent Governesses and Tutors in the shape of the permanent officials at Whitehall and Great Smith Street who try and soften the impact of one parent and prevent the more glowing indiscretions of the other from having any permanent adverse effect on their charges.

What a pity it is that the political parties in this country cannot reach agreement on the general principles of our future Colonial policy. It should never be a party matter, it is far too important to us and to the Commonwealth.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Minority Communities and Political Development

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SO far I have said very little about the minority communities in the Colony and their attitude to each other and to the place where fate has decreed they shall pass their lives or, as in the case of the majority of the Europeans, a brief part of their working life.

The European community on the whole look upon Aden as a place of exile from their own land, a place of temporary abode in which to earn a living and leave for a better land as soon as possible. They are not interested in the local people as human beings but only as potential or actual customers for their merchandise, or as passengers in their ships or as servants in their houses. They only mix with them socially when it is unavoidable, and when I left Aden in 1956 there were many whose only contacts with the Asiatic members of the community were by way of business. They never seemed to realise that they had any obligation to the place in which they earned their living, or to the people among whom they were living. There were, of course, exceptions to this general rule and these men and women by their unsparing efforts to help the poorer elements of the population and their genuine friendliness more than overcame the impediment to better inter-racial relations created by their unintelligent die-hard compatriots. It says much for them and the lead given by some of the senior Government officials and Service officers that inter-racial understanding and inter-mixing had progressed to a remarkable degree from what it was when I first went to Aden twenty-five years earlier. Understanding was helped by the fact that Aden was not troubled by that horrible thing—the colour question. There was no colour bar as such, it just did not exist, and I was determined that it would not be introduced while I had anything to do with the affairs of the Colony. There were, of course, a few people who disliked all coloured people simply because they were coloured; it has always been a mystery to me why such people ever leave their own country, but the majority of the British community just consider all non-Europeans as socially inferior in much the same way as they consider all Continentals to be socially inferior. The Arabs for their part are untroubled by any inferiority complex and regard the British generally as their social equals. The only complaints that I ever heard of racial discriminations came from members of the Indian community.

The Indian community are engaged in business or in skilled or clerical employment and are for the most part well-to-do and hope to remain so. They take no particular part in politics, but being allergic to riots and other violent commotions give generously to charitable appeals hoping thereby to remain on good terms with their neighbours. Their leaders, with one notable exception, keep out of politics and take little part in the public life of the Colony except in such business organisations as the Chamber of Commerce and the Aden Merchants Association. They are, as a community, very valuable commercially to the Colony but they are at the same time very vulnerable.

The Pakistanis are in their general attitude much like their co-dwellers in the Great Indian Peninsula, as it was at one time called, but they are fewer in number and as they share the same religion as the Arab majority are not in nearly so vulnerable a position. The Jews, on the other hand, the few that still remain in the Colony, shrewd business men though they are, have never been able to overcome racial prejudices, and even today the majority of them give the impression that they are in mortal dread of a recurrence of the riots. They make very little general effort to improve their relations with their neighbours, although some of their leaders set them an excellent example.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Minority Communities and Political Development

The Somalis, of whom there are thousands in the Colony, are, generally speaking, of an arrogant disposition which does not make them any better loved by the Arabs who consider them to be socially inferior. They are good workers in the house or wherever they can sit down to the task, and taxis and launches suit their temperament admirably. They are becoming politically conscious and already have one Somali elected member in the Legislative Council. The Arabs have found that politically they are a force not to be underestimated. 563

All the real leaders of the communities have striven and continue to strive to improve racial relations and to engender in their followers a loyalty not to their individual race or tribe, but to Aden itself and encourage them to consider themselves primarily as citizens of Aden, as Adenese rather than as Arab, Jew, European, Indian, Pakistani or Somali. In this they have been reasonably successful and it is no longer uncommon for the leaders of the communities to join together as citizens of Aden to do honour to a distinguished guest.

So much for the human backcloth to the political development which took place during the five years of my term of office, and now for the economic wings and the stage is set.

In 1937, the year of the transfer from India to the control of the Colonial Office, the income of the Colony was £140,000 to meet the full cost of the administration, the police, medical and educational services and public works; there was no financial assistance in the form of a subvention from His Majesty's Government. Two years after emancipation came the World War, with the need for the strictest economy, a godsend to Aden financially as it enabled her not only to balance the annual budget but to put something aside against the day when development could be considered and new buildings for hospitals and schools would be practicable once more. By 1955 the Colony's annual income had reached the £4,000,000 mark and the latest Development Report bound in dark red, a rather menacing colour, and optimistically called "Development Plan 1955—60", shows that approximately £10,000,000 is being spent, or has been spent, on schools, hospitals, housing and all the normal social services. This figure does not include 652 178 800

This figure does not Aden include

648 the £4,000,000 which was obtained from Her Majesty's
652 Government in the form of an Exchequer Loan at 4½ per cent.
178 for thirty years, to provide administration services and roads at Bureikha, services necessitated by the £45,000,000 Refinery and the £7,000,000 harbour with alongside berths for the great crude oil tankers completed by the B.P. Company in 1953. The finance for Colony development has been found from local Aden Government resources to the extent of £3,000,000 and a further £1,500,000 has been raised on the London Market, while the British Government has contributed £450,000 and a further £150,000 has been earmarked for a specific item, from the Exchequer Loan. The balance required to complete the programme amounts to some £3,000,000 and it is proposed, under the Development Plan, to raise a further loan of £3,500,000 in London.

652 I give these figures, not because I have the least desire to
178 compile anything in the nature of a statistical account, but
[871] because they give in brief a clear indication of the expansion economically of the Colony in the short period of less than twenty years. I have already given figures showing the tremendous advance in education over the same period, which is of particular significance when it is realised that those figures are ninety per cent. Arab, as most of the children of the minority communities attend schools which are under unofficial control although they receive very substantial annual subsidies from the Aden Government.

890 The stage is set and the prologue is spoken by Sir Muhammed Mackawee—he was knighted in 1949 for his great public service to his country—one Saturday evening in August 1951, as he and I were sitting on the roof of his garden house at Sheikh Othman. We had dined together and were drinking our coffee and enjoying the cool night breeze after the humid heat of a rather still day for that time of the year. Suddenly he startled me by saying:

"I am not sure that we are ready for democracy in Aden, not, that is, for democratic Government, and yet in some ways we Arabs are more democratic, truly democratic, than are you British."

"What makes you say that?" I asked. "You have always said that the Arab majority should have a greater share in the Government of the Colony and in Government service in the Colony. How you can say that the Arabs are more democratic than the British I just don't understand." I continued: "Our Government is essentially democratic in form and we are a democratic people, while Arabia is a collection of big and small absolute monarchies. There are twenty-four absolute Rulers in the Aden Protectorate alone."

"Make no mistake," he said, "I do feel that we should have a greater share both in the Government of the Colony and in the Government service, but I am not sure that my people are yet ready to take to the full their proper place in public affairs. We lack experience and I do not want to see inexperienced boys set in authority over the people in Aden. Our young men must be educated before they can be given responsibility, and the people must be taught the value of a vote before they can be allowed to elect their representatives to the Legislative Council."

Sir Muhammed went on: "When I was in England, I hired a car and drove from London to Scotland. The driver of that car was a very nice young man and very kind to me, a stranger in his land. I gave him my money and he paid all the bills for hotel accommodation and petrol. He was a very honest man. One day we stopped at an hotel for lunch and I asked him to come to my table. He protested, saying that he would eat at a café across the road, but I insisted that he should join me and entering the dining-room we were shown to a table by a waitress. I was about to give our order when the head waiter came to the table and said that my servant could not be served in the main dining-room but must eat with the other chauffeurs in a separate room. I was very angry and ashamed and I left the room and the hotel at once, and we both went to the café where no one objected to my lunching at the same table as my servant. Here, and particularly in the Protectorate, there is no such class distinction and when I want to eat with my servants no-one is shocked. That is why I said we were more democratic than you."

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"You were in England some time ago," I replied, "and times have changed. Nowadays most of us haven't got a man-servant to eat with and few of us can afford to lunch in the sort of hotel that would have a separate room for servants. As regards the lack of experience in the younger generation which you mentioned, I agree with you, but do not forget you can only learn to be responsible by having to exercise responsibility. No-one can learn how to make decisions unless he or she is the person who has got to make the decisions and I am convinced that the only sensible Colonial policy is one which gives the people of the Colony responsibility as early as possible and to as great an extent as possible. The mistake we have made in the past, and continue to make in some places today, is to look upon the local people as inferior beings. This is partly because we have set them a standard which is too high. We have required them to be as good as our best men before we have admitted them to Government service, instead of which we should have measured them against our worst men and if we could say honestly that they were no worse then they should have been given their chance. It is the right of all people to serve their own country and by recognising that right we shall earn the respect and friendship of the people. This is precisely what I want to do here, but the trouble is that there are so very few local men and women who are academically or technically qualified to replace ex-patriates. It's not their fault, it's our misfortune, both theirs and ours because it means delay which misinterpreted can have an unfortunate long-term effect on our relations—Arab and English relations."

"Yes, what you say is very true, especially about the effect of delay," said Mackawee. "Your difficulty will be to make people understand that they must be patient. Young people are always impatient and our foolish newspapers will not make things any easier. The editors think of their circulation and give the public what the public wants to read and often they mislead people by not telling the whole truth. Something should be done about them. These editors are ignorant and inexperienced people and must be controlled and, if necessary, restrained from publishing what is harmful."

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"Again I agree with you," I said, "but the Press is not easy to restrain, and control would cause an uproar and questions in the House of Commons."

"My friend, we are not in London. London and the United Kingdom are quite different from Aden and Arabia. Some of your Members of Parliament are very ignorant about conditions in the Colonies. They should be taught. Your country has reached its present stage of development after a thousand years and for most of that time your Press, when there was one, was controlled and not allowed to mislead the people. We are changing much more rapidly than you did and are trying to do in months what has taken you centuries. I say that you must not allow the newspapers to mislead the people. It's dangerous and your Parliament must be made to understand."

The old gentleman spoke with much feeling, but I am afraid little understanding of conditions in the United Kingdom. Our Saturday evening *tête-à-tête* parties became a custom.

I learnt much from my wise old friend.

Some ten years before this particular conversation, I was in Riyadh on a visit from Kuwait to His Majesty King Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the great Ibn Saud. I was accorded a private audience and found myself alone with the great man, who once he was satisfied that I was not the bearer of some tiresome message from my Government relaxed and talked of Arabia and the Arabs. He asked me if I knew how to deal with Arabs, and I said I knew a little about the matter but that I should be very grateful for his advice. I got it for half an hour and every time I allowed my eyes to stray from his face he tapped me on the knee and said: "Listen."

I listened and learnt. Briefly the advice amounted to this; be strong, when you are strong then you can be just and when your strength is overwhelming you can afford to be generous, but first and foremost it is strength which is of paramount importance. Diplomacy should be used to undermine the enemy's strength. Ibn Saud was certainly a successful exponent of his own doctrine. It was wise advice which I was, in later years, to follow to the best of my ability.

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The plan for the political development of the Colony was

632 178 666 to ensure ordered conditions in the Colony by a firm Government policy while political changes were taking place, and at first to concentrate on the municipal field as a training ground for young men who were sufficiently public spirited to want to play their part in public affairs. The practice was introduced of nominating younger men to the Township Authorities, and in March 1933 the constitution of the Aden Township Authority was changed to allow for three of the members to be elected from the Township area and from April 1st of that year it was restored to the status of a municipality. Thus Aden came to have its first elections.

665 666 Careful thought was given to the qualifications of both candidates and electors. There were plenty of people in the Colony who could qualify as candidates, but it was essential to encourage really good men to come forward, and this was done, with the result that the elections were a success from every point of view. They were well conducted and orderly, and resulted in three good men, all Arabs, being returned. Two years later the number of elected members was doubled.

841 A word about the electorate. It was essential in a place as politically immature as Aden that the franchise, while being reasonably wide, should not be too wide and certainly not universal. Only a small proportion of the population had ever voted before and they were all from overseas, either the United Kingdom or India. There were many Yemenis in the town, many of whom had a residential qualification, but comparatively few of whom were other than unskilled labourers, with no idea of the value of a vote and little real interest in Aden other than as a temporary home in which to make sufficient money to support their families in the Yemen. Property or income qualification was, therefore, insisted upon before a name could be inscribed on the electoral roll and in addition, residential qualifications for electors who were not Aden born.

Nothing would have been more ill-advised than to have given the ultimate power to people quite unfit to exercise it, who were easily swayed by political demagogues capable of passionate but irresponsible speech. The electoral act, therefore, 641 was spread with care. Later, when more understanding had come to the people and they were politically more mature, it could be spread wider by a relaxation of some of the qualifications. In practice, when some years later it was necessary to consider again the qualifications of electors when the electoral principle was introduced for the selection of some of the members of the Legislative Council, it was found that the rise in wage rates had so broadened the field that no relaxation was desirable. The day will undoubtedly come when there will be adult suffrage, but I think that that is still some way away, especially so in the case of women who are only just emerging from the cocoon of purdah.

666 646 It seemed obvious to us, even in those early days, that there should be a common electoral roll both for the Municipal and later the Legislative Council elections. No-one ever thought of having a communal roll, and I was surprised to learn that there were such things in other Colonies when I was congratulated one day by a visiting Member of Parliament on our good sense. I am afraid there was little cause for congratulation; it was abysmal ignorance combined with common sense.

The only time that any question of communal candidates was raised was in 1955 in connection with the Legislative Council elections, when it was proposed from an unofficial source that the minority communities should be given representation on the Council, not by nomination, but by the election of candidates from those communities by the electorate as a whole. This would clearly not have been in the interests of the minority communities because the candidate who made the most appeal to the majority community, the Arabs, would have won the seat and he might not have had the confidence of his community or been inclined to represent their interests when they conflicted with those of the majority of his supporters. For this very sufficient reason the proposal was not pursued.

646 During the first three years of my term of office changes were made in the nominated Unofficial membership of the Legislative Council. Some of the older members who had given sterling service, but who had got somewhat out-of-date, were not re-nominated when their term of office expired. They

willingly gave place to younger men who were more up-to-date and more in touch with popular thought.

Then at the formal opening of the ninth Session of the Council in January 1955, I was able to announce that the Secretary of State had accepted, in principle, the proposals that I had put forward to him for the reconstitution of the Council. Broadly speaking, the proposals, while maintaining the official majority, introduced the electoral principle for the filling of a number of Unofficial seats. These proposals had been formulated by me after I had had confidential and unofficial consultations with both Official and Unofficial members of the Legislative Council. I informed the Council that I had now been authorised to discuss the proposals with the Unofficial members, and I said that I proposed to do so forthwith. At the same time I stated very clearly that the fact that we were about to take a major step forward did not mean that within a short time we should be taking longer and longer and quicker and quicker strides in our forward movement. We were moving uphill and not down, and our steps would be slower and shorter as our progress became more difficult and our rate of progress must depend on our capacity to acclimatise ourselves to new conditions.

The conversations began and were ended speedily in an atmosphere of great goodwill and the first elections were held at the end of 1955—which was very satisfactory progress when all the various formalities that are necessary to a change in the Constitution are taken into consideration. The Council and the Colony were lucky in their first election because a very high standard of member was returned. They were all able men anxious to learn, whose entrance into public life had been, with one exception, either through the Municipal Committee or the Sheikh Othman Township Authority on which they had served. The exception was a Somali gentleman who won his seat in a three-cornered (or four-cornered—I forget which) fight with Arab opponents in the Ma'alla-Tawahi division which has an Arab majority but a considerable Somali vote. The Arab candidates split the Arab vote and suffered accordingly.

646 The Legislative Council was enlarged slightly at the same time so that it consisted of nine *ex-officio* and nominated Official members, four Unofficial members elected by the electoral divisions of the Colony, one Unofficial member elected from among and by the members of the Municipal Committee, thus encouraging young men to work in that sphere and at the same time ensuring a proper representation of municipal interest, and four nominated Unofficial members. Of the nominated Unofficial members one was required by the Constitution to represent business interests and the others represented minority communities, or were persons whose wise counsel was of great value to the Chamber. Nine on each side of the Chamber, with the Governor presiding, there was thus a slender, very slender Government majority.

An analysis of the members showed that the Council consisted of eleven Europeans, two of them on the unofficial side, five Arabs, one Somali and one Indian. The fact that there were so many Europeans had no particular significance because there was no reason why a number of the Departmental Heads on the official side should not, in time, be local men. On the unofficial side the European who represented trading interests was the President of the Chamber of Commerce, an appointment which may well be filled at a not too distant date by a non-European, though it will always have to be borne in mind that the considerable trading interests of the European business houses must have adequate representation.

645 [642] At the same time as I informed the Legislative Council that changes in their constitution were contemplated, I was able to tell them that that very day the Executive Council had been strengthened by the addition of an Arab Unofficial member. Since then a further addition to the Executive Council has taken place and there were by the end of 1956 two Arab unofficial members as well as the one European Unofficial member. There had always been a European Unofficial member on the Council since the inception of the Executive Council in 1937.

642 648 In the spring of 1956 there was a clamour in the Press for further constitutional advance, uninstructed clamour largely

642-648 induced by political developments in other Colonies and to some extent the disagreeable radio broadcasts from Egypt. A firm line was clearly necessary and it was time that a statement of policy should be made so that everyone knew precisely where he stood. This was done by Lord Lloyd, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies. He came out to Aden and British Somaliland on an official tour and, at my invitation, he addressed the Legislative Council, and in effect said that there was not going to be any change during the life of the present Council, that is, before the end of 1958, and that it would not be reasonable or sensible, or in the interests of the inhabitants of the Colony, for them to aspire in the foreseeable future to anything beyond a considerable degree of self-government. The clamour died down gradually and the majority of the Colony papers began to have a much more sensible approach to the political future of the Colony.

668 Lord Lloyd's visit was not without incident and was made the occasion for a political demonstration. On the afternoon of his arrival a number of members of the political extremist Party, the National United Front, whose political platform was full self-government tomorrow or even sooner, had collected at the Airport with the intention of demonstrating. They were persons of no consequence and in a number of cases of dubious character. Some of them carried walking sticks and others had banners on which were written nationalistic slogans. They had arrived just before I did, and the Commissioner of Police asked me whether he should disperse them. There was no doubt about his ability to do so if I had considered it desirable, but my answer was that they could remain provided they did not transgress the law in any way. The 'plane bringing Lord Lloyd had just touched down, and after this short conversation with the Commissioner, I walked across the tarmac to meet him and asked him whether he would prefer to avoid the unofficial reception committee by driving out through the Royal Air Force entrance to the landing ground some half mile or so down the runway. He asked me what I thought. I said I did not see why we should be put off by these ragamuffins. He was in complete agreement. We departed through a crowd

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of some two hundred who shouted and waved a few banners. In the middle of the performance we were held up by a car coming in the opposite direction. There was some pressure of bodies round my car for a moment or two, but no assault took place and no stones were thrown. The whole incident was grossly exaggerated in the British Press.

One casualty did occur. A rather unpopular Arab gentleman who was a member of the Staff of the Public Relations Office was foolish enough to stop his car and remonstrate with the crowd. He was hit on the head, which was not in the least surprising. He should have taken Mr. Pickwick's sensible advice when he found himself in a crowd at the *Eatanswill* election:

"Hush. Don't ask any questions. It's always best on these occasions to do what the mob do," said Mr. Pickwick.

"But suppose there are two mobs?" suggested Mr. Snodgrass.

"Shout with the largest," replied Mr. Pickwick.

The injury was not serious and the sufferer was able to appear with no apparent blemish at my cocktail party in honour of Lord Lloyd at Government House the same evening.

On the way to Government House from the Airport, Lord Lloyd said:

"This is my first experience of this sort of thing."

"It's mine as well," was my answer.

I was much distressed at this incident for it was such bad manners to a guest and I hoped he would not think it was in any way representative of public opinion in the Colony.

A couple of weeks or so later when he returned from Somaliland *en route* for London, he said:

"I am glad to be back here, it's like coming home."

I was deeply gratified, for I have a fondness for Aden and was glad that no unfavourable opinion had been formed, as it might well have been after the incivility on his first arrival.

Lord Lloyd's final departure was a very tame affair. There were no crowds, no-one at all, except for a selection of reporters on the roof of the Airport building waiting for something to happen. They were disappointed, but again there was a grievous departure from the truth when Reuters and the B.B.C. reported a recurrence of the arrival incidents. In fairness I must record that the correspondent whom Reuters had sent to Aden was in no way to blame and was most upset at what one can only assume was a mistake in transmission of his telegraphic reports from Aden.

Change and the speed of that change was bound to create in some people a sense of instability. You cannot bridge the centuries in a few years without some loss of balance, and the wonder is that people kept their heads as well as they did and not that a few were carried away and on one occasion were rude and ill-mannered to a distinguished guest.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Lighter Side

I SHOULD hate it to be thought that I spent all my time thwarting the machinations of the Imam in the Protectorate or in dealing with political and labour problems in the Colony, or, indeed, in conducting a sometimes tedious and sometimes rather exhilarating telegraphic correspondence with my master and his permanent officials in Church House and Sanctuary Building. I did all these things sometimes separately and sometimes collectively, but I had always time for less mentally fatiguing and more immediately rewarding exercises.

How often have people said to me:

"I simply cannot understand how you can like living in Aden, such a dull place and there cannot be anything to do. What do you do with yourself?"

The question, of course, referred to my leisure hours and not to my work. It's curious that whereas it is generally considered to be impolite to cross-examine or directly question an acquaintance on how he or she earns a living, it's quite legitimate to inquire, within limits, how he or she spends the non-working hours. At first I used to be stimulated by the thirst for knowledge the question seemed to imply and embark upon a long and detailed, and I am afraid excessively boring, catalogue of sports and pastimes in which it was possible to indulge in Aden; but later I learnt wisdom. Unless you are a saint or a really first-rate liar, and I am neither, you will not make people believe what they don't want to, so latterly I uttered the conventional phrase:

"Oh, I don't know, lots of things, you know."

There are lots of things that can be done in Aden, and the

000
more conventional range from golf to polo and from tennis
to yachting, and from small and quite delightful dinner parties
to large and devastating cocktail parties. In fact, you can do
practically everything in and around Aden that can be done
elsewhere in the world with the exception of winter sports,
rugby football and bowls.

526 The great game of the local people is Association Football
575 and there are more than twenty Football Clubs registered with
the Aden Sports Association, which is a predominantly Asiatic
body and which exercises a degree of control over the Clubs
much on the lines of the Football Association in this country.
The Association controls also the Stadium in Crater where the
more important games are held and where Arabs, Indians and
Somalis collect in thousands with a few Europeans on Saturday
afternoons when important competition games are in progress.
The standard of play is very high and nowadays there is not
nearly so much rough play as there used to be and players and,
or, spectators seldom come to blows on or off the ground.
The hooliganism often demonstrated in this country has not
000 yet reached Aden. In this respect it is still a backward and
529 undeveloped country. Personally, although I always took an
563 interest in the game, I never played football and confined my
more athletic pursuits to hockey and tennis and I swam at Gold
Mohur Bathing Club spasmodically until I discovered it had
a colour bar rule, the only Club in Aden to have one, and then
I left. I was not sorry to go because the Club had become very
crowded and amply demonstrated the unfortunate fact that
those who can afford to remove their clothing seldom do and
those who should remain covered in the common interest
always display as much of their ample acreage as the over-liberal
000 laws permit. My main pursuits were sailing and shooting, and
526 in my earlier days sea fishing. Most unfortunately sailing and
575 shooting are seasonal in Aden and the season is the same for
both, so I was forever being torn between the two and what
made matters much worse was that the Aden Yacht Club's
weekly race was on Sunday morning, and Sunday morning
was the only morning in the week that my conscience would
000 allow me to take off to shoot. Generally I shot until Christmas

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

by which time most of the duck had gone away, and then 000
sailed for the rest of the season, although I have, on occasion, done both on the same morning, but to get up at 3 a.m., drive forty miles along the seashore and over rough country, shoot till 9 a.m., then drive forty miles back and take the helm in a yacht race from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. was rather too much for my lazy temperament, and I did not often make the effort.

When I first went to Aden I had a small dhow built on the 396
Ma'alla water-front in one of the attractive boat yards which were such a fascinating feature of the place and had been for many years until progress, initiated by myself, reclaimed the
area; and the builders, deprived of the sea, went to an island in 600
the harbour where a beach had been made for their reception. The *Nur-al-Bahr* or *Light of the Sea*, as my dhow was named, was twenty feet overall and was constructed of teak fastened below the water-line with copper nails and above with iron, and was built during the hot weather to be ready for the winter sailing season. I spent many enjoyable hours watching her grow. When she was finished she was painted white below the water line and with a traditional pattern in green and blue and red above; and she was provided with two eyes, one on each side of the bow, so that she could see where she was going, as my Arab boat boys pointed out when I uttered a mild protest at
this last piece of artistry. When all was finished there came the 396
final ceremony before the actual launching, a ceremony as old 778
as the hills wrapped in the mists of pre-Islamic times when blood sacrifices were common throughout the world. A sheep, acquired at my expense, was the sacrifice and was slaughtered near the vessel. The fresh blood was daubed on the stern post, along the keel, and on the stem, after which the animal was cooked and eaten by the builders. There was a very real reason for this sacrifice and it was not, as some people might think, to provide the builders with a substantial supper. It was to give a life to the vessel before she was launched and thus prevent her from taking one after she was afloat, as she surely would
have done according to popular belief. In the Persian Gulf a 789
further and somewhat similar belief is that a woman has only 171
to step over a new laid keel to become pregnant and in the 396

789 fullness of time present her husband with a son. Unfortunately
171 it is equally firmly believed that having given a life in this way
396 the vessel will demand a life from her crew once she is afloat,
and so all new vessels are closely guarded in the builders' yards
until the planking has reached such a height that the most
agile female would not be able to jump over the keel.

600 It was not long before I could manage my dhow reasonably
well with the aid of my two Arab fishermen, and for excitement
and exhilaration I have never met anything to equal a racing
dhow in a stiff breeze being driven hard on a reach. When I
became Governor I was more conventional and had a fast
Bermuda-rigged "Seabird" of my own, by name Osprey, but
I never had as much pleasure from the new boat as I had from
my dhow which still sails the seas and was fishing off the
British Somaliland coast when I last heard of her.

My second main amusement, either in the evenings or on
Sundays and other public holidays, or when I was on tour in
136 the Protectorate, was shooting. Duck and sand grouse were to
be had at Lahej in the Wadi Tibban; the former flighting up
and down the Wadi and the latter when they came down to the
Wadi to drink or were feeding in the stubble on the fields
bordering the Wadi. It was a tiresome drive to Lahej over very
corrugated desert and if I was just out for an evening's amusement
I preferred to go down the Khormaksar beach to Abiyan
600 in the hope of two or three ducks. When we went to Abiyan
to shoot in earnest we used to set out any time after midnight
on Saturday in order to work the tides. The only way to get
to Abiyan was on the hard sand of the beach between high and
low water, and in order to have as much time to shoot as
possible the outward journey had to be made just after high
water. This was a variable factor, hence the uncertainty of the
time of departure when the actual driving time was only about
an hour on the beach itself. I drove one Land-Rover and my
guards followed in the second, more to act as beaters and
retrievers than as an armed escort, though they always had
their rifles just in case. When driving on the beach the trick
was to follow the outgoing wave down on to the hardest part
of the sand and then run up the sand again in front of the next

&: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

incoming wave. Sometimes I was not successful in the manoeuvre and we ran into the sea and we all had a very chilly shower bath, but no-one was ever hurt and we never got stuck in the sand. We turned off the beach at a place called Al Kod and made our way on foot to the artificial lakes formed by flood water behind irrigation dams. I and my two friends—there were seldom more than three guns—have had many a happy Sunday morning wandering from lake to lake and many were the mallard or pintail or shoveller or teal that fell to our guns. We had to work hard for what we got, and twelve birds was a good individual bag. 000

When the sun was well up and all the birds had flown out to sea to wait there until we had gone away, we would forgather on the beach and count the bag and have breakfast. There was intense rivalry among the guards, each one championing the gun he had been detailed to attend, and my own two men were bitterly disappointed if I did not shoot at least as many birds as either of my friends. Breakfast on the sands by the lovely blue sea in the warm sun was quite delightful after a fairly strenuous couple of hours walking very often up to our waist in muddy water. I always brought enough food for everybody, the guards included, and they enjoyed these trips as much as any of us. After breakfast we drove home again and would get back in time for a hot bath and a glass of cold beer before lunch.

In the highlands of the Protectorate I shot chikor, the greater hill partridge, a very handsome bird not unlike the ordinary French partridge of this country but much bigger and very beautifully marked on the sides of the breast, and See See the small hill partridge which runs like a hare and only as a last resort takes the air to skim just above the ground in a very disconcerting manner. There were blue rock pigeon on the Audhali plateau and very occasionally I saw the greater bustard, but only once was I lucky enough to shoot one, a truly magnificent bird weighing over twenty pounds and very good eating. The hares on the Audhali plateau were as big as our own hares in England and better eating, but they were difficult to get in the rocky ground. They always succeeded, 186 1

156 or almost always, in dodging behind a rock just as I pressed the trigger. The last hare I shot was just before I left Aden when I was paying a farewell visit to the Audhali Sultan at goo Mukeiras. I determined one morning to walk over the hills to the north-east of the village to see if I could find a covey of chikor which I knew lived in the area. The Yemen border was only a mile or so from where I was going and there was always the likelihood of running into some rascals from that country who might be engaged in less harmless hunting; so I agreed to the Sultan's suggestion that I should take two of his trusted men as well as my own six guards. I deployed my troops as two flank guards and a rear guard each of two men and kept the Sultan's two men and the Assistant Adviser with me. We set off and walked for an hour into the hills without seeing a sign of chikor, hares, or even Yemenis and we had reached a small plateau surrounded by granite boulders well up into the high hills, when suddenly there was a rifle shot fairly close to us over to the left on the Yemen side. My left flank guard was out of sight and in two seconds so were my companions who dashed madly off in the direction of the shot and were immediately hidden from my view by the boulders. I glanced round and saw that the right flank guard was in position and obviously very excited, while the rear guard was racing in the direction of the Yemen presumably to the assistance of their companions. I was left to my own devices armed with a twelve-bore shot-gun, a very useful weapon at close quarters, and as there seemed no point in doing anything else, I continued to walk forward across the plateau. I had gone only a few yards when there was another rifle shot, this time very close to me on my left and I stopped dead and waited to see what would happen next, with my gun ready to give any assailant a warm welcome. Then round a boulder in front of me there came a very large hare moving as if all the devils in hell were behind him. I shot him and as I did so all the devils in the shape of my guards, the Sultan's men and the Assistant Adviser came rushing round the boulder in hot pursuit of the unfortunate animal who had been the cause of all the excitement. He had been put up by the flank guard and the man nearest to him had had a shot

and started the confusion. I cursed all and sundry and we 800 re-formed and continued our advance, but the rest of the morning was unsuccessful, not even the Yeminis putting in an appearance, and we returned to Mukeiras with the hare alone to show for our trouble.

Shooting blue rock pigeon on the Audhali plateau was an 136 amusing pastime and required a certain knack. The best time was from 6.30 a.m. to 7.15 a.m. when they flew in packs of from five to fifty up the steep Wadis, from their nesting places on the edge of the escarpment, out on to the fields of the plateau to feed. They returned two or three hours later, but they then flew far too high and were too scattered to make it worth while going out. The plan was to station the guns on the sides of a Wadi where they could intercept the outward flight. The birds flew at about the same level as the guns and preferred to fly along the Wadi sides rather than up the centre. It looked very simple shooting, but what the inexperienced gun did not realise was that the birds were advancing on him at between thirty and forty miles an hour, with the result that he invariably fired too late and to his annoyance often registered a phenomenal number of clean misses. The trick was to fire the right barrel when you thought the birds were just out of range. This broke up the formation and gave a chance for a second shot. If the birds passed to one side of the gun they could be enfiladed, but this was a risky business because all the little boys from any nearby village came out as soon as they heard the first shot fired and hid among the rocks on the hillside ready to rush down and collect the empty cartridge cases as soon as the shoot was over.

There were a few quail among the sweet potatoes in the Lahej oasis and they could be good fun, but there were always too many people working in the fields for my peace of mind. I never did hit anyone, I am glad to say, but the cattle were less 000 fortunate and one afternoon I peppered a cow. The No. 8 shot produced an extraordinary rash on the animal, but otherwise it did not seem to be much the worse for wear, though from the shrill lamentations from the old woman who was in charge of the animal anyone would have imagined I

000 had shot her and not her cow. A judicious gift of hard cash put an abrupt end to the cries and the old creature hustled the unfortunate cow along in front of her with a sharp pointed stick in her haste to get home to her family and display her wealth.

It was on my way back from this quail shoot that a small boy put me very neatly in my place. He was in charge of a string of camels moving down the middle of what passed for a road, each tied by a cord through the nose to the tail of the one in front. I was driving very carefully and I slowed down when I saw the camels so as not to frighten them, but in spite of my care they stampeded and got themselves all mixed up as a
576 nylon line does when the reel overruns. The boy gave His
Excellency the Governor, myself, one very expressive look
/123 as he rushed off to sort out the tangle and asked this pertinent
or impertinent question—it depends on the point of view:

"Who gave birth to you?"

Rude, but very neat, and I burst out laughing, but not so my guards who were furious and had to be restrained from teaching the young man manners.

136 So much for the small game possibilities of Aden. There were still oryx in the Rube-al-Khali, in spite of Land-Rovers, gazelle on the plains and ibex in the Wahidi country, but they are very hard to reach and impossible unless one happens to be stationed in the Protectorate and even then access is not easy; the country is wild and so are the people.

000 To the big game enthusiast (and I am no longer one since I sickened of seeing animals' heads on my walls), British Somaliland is only eighteen hours away across the Gulf of Aden by local steamer from Aden. There is game in plenty there, and always the chance, no more, of a lion. The last time I was there was to shoot sand grouse with the Governor, Sir Theodore Pike, in a dry season. We were stationed by the only water for many miles round and the birds came in hundreds to drink. We contented ourselves with taking a few single birds, to shoot at the coveys would have been murder, and then by mutual consent we stopped and watched. I was amazed at what I saw. We were standing within ten yards of the water

and as soon as we stopped firing the sand grouse came in flocks, in some of which there were more than a hundred birds, until there were at least a thousand birds on the ground at one time within a few yards of us, and still they came and drank and flew off quite oblivious in their desperate thirst, of our presence.

"What is there to do in Aden?"

Well, now you know at least part of the answer, and you can guess the rest. Dinner parties, tennis parties, cocktail parties, bathing parties and picnic parties are much the same anywhere in the world.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Exit

(This is written in the third person and not the first because although it refers to my own departure it has happened in all the Colonies to many people and is in no way unique.)

THE handsome double doors of wrought-iron and ground-glass at Government House are wide open, and in front of them waits the ceremonial car, which was purchased two years ago by the Colony for the visit of Her Majesty the Queen. Waiting also are all the Government House servants drawn up in line from the head servant down through the various grades to the sweepers, those essential beings who undertake all the more humble tasks. The Governor, who is in plain clothes, comes through the doors for the last time and walks across to the line of servants. He moves slowly down the line shaking hands with each in turn and uttering a few words of thanks and good wishes as he does so. They are part of his family, he has no other, and parting with them is not easy. No-one smiles, for the old master is leaving and with all his faults he has treated them kindly and they are not unappreciative. The farewells said, the Governor takes his seat in the car and as soon as the A.D.C. has taken his place beside him it moves slowly forward out of the new entrance gates to the new Government House which has been his creation.

This last journey of so many to the airport, the first building that he declared open at the beginning of his term of office five years before, is the climax to his work for the people of the Colony and the Protectorate. Everybody has been most kind during these last few weeks and he has attended farewell functions given by all sorts and conditions of people. The Chamber of Commerce, with whom he has been more closely associated than his predecessors, have entertained him at an open-air function, and the members of the Legislative Council have held an evening party in his honour in the Council Chamber, which was once St. Mary's Church. The Services, who have always been his loyal colleagues, have dined him in Mess, and the Rulers of the Western Protectorate have entertained him at a brilliant gathering on the roof of the Crescent Hotel. The Government Guards have entertained him to dinner in the traditional manner, sheep roasted whole and mounds of rice, with all the guests seated on the floor, while an army of bare-footed young guardsmen have heaped their plates with an impossible amount of food. The Orient Club, a Club which has the most cosmopolitan membership of any Club in the Colony and with which he has been connected very closely, have given a party in his honour, and he has torn himself away from Colony engagements to pay a fleeting farewell visit to the Eastern Protectorate people at Mukalla. Finally, he has attended a tea-party in the Sheikh Othman Gardens given by the citizens of Aden, where several hundred people of all races and walks of life were gathered. The representatives of his hosts with whom he sat at tea-time were two Arabs, a Parsee, an Indian, two Europeans, a Somali and a Jew. It gave him great pleasure to realise that the leaders of all the communities had organised the function and to see their guests moving about and mixing together in concord and harmony.

Everywhere people have wished him well and hoped for his happiness in his life of retirement in his homeland, but as he drives on this hot summer afternoon through the deserted streets, the people came out to see him arrive but now that he is going no one troubles to leave the cool of their houses, he is feeling dispirited and tired. The last few weeks have been a strain with the round of farewell engagements super-imposed on the heavy responsibilities of his office and always has there been the knowledge that he is going away from the land he knows better than any other in the world. He thinks as the car moves swiftly along, as he has often thought before during these last few days, and on one occasion said, he is not going home, he is leaving home. He is leaving a part of the world in which he has spent more years of his life than in any other and in which he has known more happiness.

He has no regrets about any single action which he has taken during his term of office, but there is much that he would like to have seen completed before he left. However, his successor is an able man, experienced in modern political development, who speaks the language of the people, and he knows the work will be carried on probably better than if he had stayed to do it himself. It has been a full life with plenty of change and little chance of boredom, and if at times he has been exasperated almost to the limit of endurance, at others he has been surprised how easily some difficult situation has been resolved. On the whole the gods have been very kind. He has been particularly blessed with an efficient and loyal staff, men of talent and individuality with strong views. He would not have wished it otherwise because the country needed such men, but their very virtues have not made his life any easier for he himself is not without a will of his own and he recalls that years before one of his Commanding Officers described him as "damned pigheaded". Knowing this failing he has always tried not to interfere too much and probably has not always succeeded. Never mind, all that is over and done with now and he realises, not for the first time, that no-one could have wished for better subordinates or more generous and co-operative Service colleagues.

The airport is in sight now and there is no time for further fruitless musing. He waves farewell to the few people who have collected at the airport building as the car drives through the private gateway on to the tarmac apron. Everything has been timed to the minute. The B.O.A.C. "Argonaut" airliner is waiting and all the other passengers have already embarked. The car stops at the steps of the dais in front of which the Guard of Honour of the Royal Air Force Regiment with the band of the Aden Protectorate Levies is drawn up, and

descending, he says a word of greeting to the *Air Officer* 800
Commanding, and then steps up on to the dais.

The Guard of Honour present arms, the band breaks into "God Save the Queen", and the guns of the Royal Artillery Saluting Battery commence the salute. He stands bare-headed in the sun as he listens to the National Anthem being played for him as the Queen's representative for the last time. The guns cease firing, the parade is reported by the Officer Commanding and he walks over to start his last inspection. It does not take long and is curiously similar to the first Guard he inspected five years before. Fine men, well turned out and smart and precise in their drill.

The inspection over His Excellency moves across with the Air Officer Commanding to where, waiting to say farewell, are those specially privileged to be on the tarmac. Some of the Protectorate Rulers, the members of the Executive Council, and the members of the Legislative Council, and, a happy and kindly thought of the most loyal of Chief Secretaries, the six Arab Officers and men of the Government Guards who have been his constant companions and body-guard during his travels in the Protectorate and with them his two personal servants. A truly democratic gathering, the highest and the lowest, just as he would have wished.

Farewells are always best said quickly, and in a few minutes the Governor is walking across to the aircraft with the Air Officer Commanding and the Chief Secretary. At the foot of the gangway he shakes hands with his companions and with the B.O.A.C. representative, and so up the steps and with a last wave of his hand into the aircraft.

Another Governor has come and gone.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MMI Aden MMI

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

From the "Upper Circle" 1958

000 TWO years have passed since I left Aden and ceased to take an active part in the South Arabian drama, and much has happened in the Middle East in that comparatively short space of time. I feel, therefore, that this work would not be complete if I did not refer briefly to major events which have directly and indirectly had their effect on both the Colony and the Protectorate. I do so as a spectator far removed from the Arabian stage, and in consequence I may have missed some of the finer points, but the general theme of the play has not been too difficult to follow.

829 This is neither the place nor the time to examine the pros and cons of the action taken by the British Government in conjunction with the French Government following on the seizure in 1956 of the Suez Canal by President Nasser of Egypt. It is the effect of that action on the people of Aden with which I am concerned. At first the landing at Suez surprised and bewildered moderates and extremists in the Colony alike, but when the initial shock had worn off the moderates voiced their disapproval in reasonable language and the extremists made the most of the aggression aspect of the affair and condemned the, to their way of thinking, unprovoked attack upon an Arab country. There were those, but they were very few, who were prepared to say plainly that they hoped our action would result in the downfall of Nasser. But whatever may have been said in public there were many who in private desired our success, though they could not approve the method we had employed.

441 The trading community was gravely disturbed, not so much
434 by the possible political consequences of Suez, but by the

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actual effect the closure of the Canal must have on their own 434
business interests. Events showed that they had good reason 182
to be concerned. Shipping fell away rapidly. The monthly 648
average of ships entering the port of Aden for the six months 505
prior to the crisis, that is, from May to October 1956, was 454. In November only 277 ships used the port, and by February 1957 the number was down to 93, the lowest point to be reached. Business throughout the Colony was similarly affected and the trade with passengers, on which the merchants of Steamer Point depend for their livelihood, virtually ceased as all passenger ships were diverted round the Cape.

The finances of the Colony were dealt a blow from which they have yet to recover and behind the immediate and, it was hoped, temporary dislocation of trade, there lurked the fear that the major Shipping Companies having once become accustomed to routing their ships by the Cape to Australia and the Far East, would continue to do so even when the Canal was open once again to world shipping. Mercifully for the Government of Aden and the trading community and all who depended upon them and the port for their living this fear proved to be groundless. Once the Canal was cleared and reopened the volume of shipping returned to normal much earlier than had been expected by the most optimistic.

The bright side of the picture was that in spite of the diver- 648
gence of views over Suez, personal relations between Govern- 208
ment officials and their Arab friends remained unimpaired. At 204
the same time the example of moderation shown by the local 829
Press, in particular in the English language, was one which even the newspapers in the United Kingdom would have done well to have followed. All newspapers in Aden are Arab or Indian-owned and the two main English language papers are both Arab owned and Arab edited. All the more commendable, therefore, was their restraint during this most difficult period.

In the Protectorate the reaction was somewhat different. 829
There was satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government had, at last, shown that they were capable of strong and determined action and with it was born a hope in the hearts of the Rulers on the Yemen frontier that it would be the turn of that country

829 next. However, this satisfaction was short lived. When the Socialist Party in the United Kingdom turned against the Government's Suez policy then the Rulers knew that there could be no swift and happy ending to the venture. A united front by the political parties in the United Kingdom would have borne immediate fruit, but Nasser, heartened by his enemy divided at home, did what any one of the Protectorate Rulers would have done in similar circumstances. He hung on and waited while his efficient propaganda machine worked day and night to magnify the rift. The Socialist Party in this country did themselves no good in the Aden Protectorate by their conduct during the Suez crisis.

000 If our action in landing on Egyptian soil had been successful I have no doubt that there would have been general satisfaction in the Colony and in the Protectorate. Our apparent bias towards the Jews and our unpopular companions, the French, would have been overlooked and British prestige would have soared. Success is even more successful in the East than it is in the West, and much is forgiven a successful country or individual. Nasser of Egypt is the finest example. He has had success after success and his well-organised broadcasting services have turned his minor reverses into yet more successes. One of these days he will have a reverse which cannot be disguised, and then will come the real test of how firmly he is established on his pinnacle.

829 The decision of Her Majesty's Government to withdraw from Suez delighted our enemies and flabbergasted our friends, and our prestige in the Middle East went down and down. In Aden we did not suffer as badly as in some other places, and this may have been due to some extent to a general belief that the United States had let us down. It was rumoured that America had declined to support us in the event of Russia intervening and the disgust at what seemed to many, at first sight, to be our pusillanimous conduct was tinged with sympathy.

The birth of the United Arab Republic was greeted in the Colony with general satisfaction. It did not seem to the merchants that Aden's interests would be adversely affected

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1
Yemen ML1

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and this manifestation of Arab unity and progress was certainly 829
not unwelcome to the public. Some there were who felt that the unusual union would not stand the test of time, but the anti-Communist aspect of the move made a general appeal. The Arab Muslim has a profound dislike of Communism, a creed, if it can be so described, fundamentally opposed to the teaching of Islam.

In the Protectorate the new Republic was viewed with little enthusiasm by the Rulers of the Western section of the Protectorate who were alive to the possibility of the Yemen becoming a partner in the union in spite of her monarchial system of government. They knew full well that the Imam's sole object in joining would be to secure Egyptian assistance in his almost open war against the Protectorate. The Crown Prince of the Yemen might have other and possibly more high-minded motives in wooing the Egyptians, but not so his father whose thoughts were concentrated on the furtherance of his claims Y
to the Protectorate. A

The fears of the Rulers were fully justified. No sooner had 648
the Yemen, already strengthened with arms from behind the 721
Iron Curtain, joined the United Arab Republic than the disturbances on the Aden-Yemen frontier were intensified and Communist arms and Egyptian and Russian instructors aggravated an already dangerous situation. Y

There is no doubt that the possession of automatic weapons [411]
and artillery by the Yemen has put a much more serious aspect on the acts of aggression which the Government of that country continues to initiate against the Protectorate, and the Protectorate Rulers most closely affected have been outspoken in their condemnation of the Yemen and in their demand that Her Majesty's Government fulfil her treaty pledges and take immediate action to prevent further aggres- Y
sion. Theirs is a very natural reaction, and it would seem that A
at long last a stronger line is to be taken with the Yemen. In 648
May of this year the Royal Air Force carried out a successful 626
attack on Yemen gun positions near the town of Qataba in the Yemen. These guns had been shelling British forces well within Protectorate limits in the Dhala Amirate. Nothing could have 000

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1
Yemen ML1

000 been more justified than this air attack which heartened our
friends as much as it dismayed their enemies.

Yet while it would be dangerous to underestimate the gravity
of the situation on the Aden-Yemen frontier, it would be most
unwise to lose a proper sense of proportion and exaggerate
unduly the magnitude of the operations which have so far
taken place. Operations which had they occurred between the
two World Wars on the north-west frontier of India would
have received but the most cursory attention from the Press
of this country. Nor must we disregard the internal condition
Y of the Yemen which must cause the Imam greater worry than
669 does that of the Protectorate the Governor of Aden. Only
recently has there been a disturbance in the neighbourhood of
Sana which the Imam is reported to have suppressed with his
usual vigour and that lonely man, who can place his trust in so
few, must realise how grave are the risks of serious internal
strife in his country which may result in his death or deriving
Y from his death.

648 Arms and ammunition are not the only things that the Yemen
411 has obtained from Russia and her satellites. Money and tech-
504 nicians for the development of the port at Hodeidah have been
439 provided, and rumour has linked Russia and Egypt with the
alleged building of a submarine base farther south and the
fortification of Sheikh Said overlooking the island of Perim
which is part of the Colony of Aden. Hodeidah will cost a
tremendous amount to develop into a safe harbour, and when
this has been done it will be years before there will be sufficient
trade to attract shipping in any quantity. Even though a port
is on a main trade route, shipowners will not put their vessels
in unless there are very substantial attractions such as cargo
9 in quantities or, as at Aden, cheap bunkers.

Y It will be a long time, if ever, before Aden need fear a serious
504 set-back from Hodeidah's competition, though undoubtedly
648 some of the present coastal trade will be affected and the land
694 route from Aden to Taiz may feel the effect when the new road
from Taiz to Hodeidah is completed.

Y Sheikh Said may have been fortified to the extent of a
712 battery or so of guns, but their only value is in their effect

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1
Yemen ML1

locally in increasing the prestige of the Imam. As a threat to Y 712
anyone they are not worthy of consideration and should prove
an easy target for aircraft should the need to obliterate them ever A
arise. Perim is no longer of any military importance and has 712
not been garrisoned since 1928 and has had no commercial
importance since Lambert Brothers or the Perim Coal Com- A
pany closed down some twenty years ago. The only claim to 502
be of use that the island can make is that it is the site of two
essential lighthouses, and even in this respect it is a nuisance
as the presence of the lighthouses necessitates the maintenance
on the island of a detachment of Armed Police. As there is no
water on the island a condenser has to be manned and main-
tained to provide the lighthouse crews and the police with
drinking water. Altogether Perim has become rather more of
a liability than an asset.

I think it most unlikely that there ever has been any intention 000
of the Yemen or Egypt to construct a submarine base at the
southern end of the Red Sea. It would be most uncomfortable
in the summer, within easy range of aircraft from Aden and
altogether rather pointless. Submarines will probably visit
Hodeidah if they have Commanders sufficiently skilful and in-
trepid to navigate through the reefs which surround that place,
and they may call at Mocha farther south, but I see no menace
to anyone in this and can only hope that Russian and Chinese
gold and dollars will be wasted on so fruitless an enterprise. A

The highlights of this otherwise rather gloomy picture are 701
the loyalty of the Protectorate Forces and the renewed interest 703
of the Protectorate States in the Federation plan. The Aden
Protectorate Levies and the Government Guards consist, as we
know, entirely of Arabs from the Protectorate States with
British and Arab officers; in the Government Guards of equal
status in the higher ranks. Their bravery and devotion to duty
under continuous and almost intolerable strain has been out-
standing, and they have won the admiration and respect of
everyone by their work for their country in whose defence
they have always been ready to lay down their lives. A

Under the continued spur of Yemen aggression and sub- 642
version the States of the Protectorate seem at last to have realised 178

642 178 the weakness of their position so long as they remain isolated the one from the other by jealousy and personal pride with the result that the States of Beihan, the Audhali, Dhala, the Fadli and the central State of Dathina have all intimated their desire to federate together, and discussions are in progress with the Colonial Office and the Governor on the practical implementation of their decision. The Aulaki Sheikh, also, from whose territory so many of the Levies and Guards are recruited, has signified his readiness to join a federation, and I am sure that other States will follow the lead which has been given them and hope that before this year is ended the Protectorate will have taken a major step forward.

642 643 Internally the Protectorate has not been free from disturbance. In Lower Yafa Sultan Muhammed allowed himself to be swayed by Egyptian propaganda and deserted his charge, the lowland reaches of his State embracing the northern half of the rich cotton yielding Abiyan plain. He fled to the Yafa highlands and on into Yemen, taking with him the Lower Yafa Tribal Guards, which were of no moment, and the contents of his father's, the Sultan's Treasury amounting to £10,000 which did matter. The Assistant Adviser on the spot, who was himself an Arab, acted promptly and vigorously and the void left by the Tribal Guards was filled rapidly by Government Guards from Aden. There were no disturbances of any moment and the situation was never out of control. Sultan Mohd's defection was deplorable but understandable for he was ever a wayward and foolish fellow and his country is no worse for his absence.

687 669 Over to the West in the Sultanate of Lahej a very unhappy position has arisen. It is nothing to do with the State's frontier with the Yemen which was at one time a continuous worry but recently has been unusually peaceful. The Sultan who was the first to approve federation in principle and the most difficult to deal with in the discussions which followed the 1954 meeting at Government House, in April of this year, left his State, presumably in protest at the arrest by the Governor's order of his Minister for Education, Abdullah bin Ali, one of the Jifri Saiyid. The order for arrest, which was on a charge of

seditious activity, included also the names of his brothers, 687
Muhammed bin Ali Jifri, the Sultan's Chief Minister and Alawi 669
bin Ali Jifri, both of whom succeeded in escaping to the Yemen. All three of these men who are Saiyids from Yeshbum in the Aulaki sheikhdom were well known to the Sultan, indeed they could be described as personal friends. Lahej was occupied temporarily by troops, and the Sultan, who was in Aden at the time, left for the United Kingdom shortly afterwards, leaving one of his cousins in charge of the State as his deputy.

There is not the slightest doubt that the Governor's action was fully justified and timely, nor is there any doubt that Lahej has for some time been a centre for pro-Nasser and anti-British propaganda. Shortly after the events recorded above, a raid was made on the Lahej village of Dar Saad, but a stone's throw from Sheikh Othman in the Colony. A detachment of Government Guards surrounded the village and a thorough search resulted in the seizure of no less than several tons of explosives and fireworks and arms and ammunition including automatic rifles. These automatic weapons could not have been obtained from either the Colony or the Protectorate.

In June Yahya Hiosi the Commandant of the Lahej "Army" fled to the Yemen with some of his troops and a considerable sum of money from the State Treasury. In July His Highness, Sir Ali bin Abdul Karim, left London for Rome and a day or two later Her Majesty's Government withdrew recognition from him as Sultan of Lahej.

Now let us turn to local events in the Colony. Shortly after 276
I left Aden in 1956 the question of Qāt began to trouble the minds of the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council. Qāt is a shrub cultivated in the Yemen and in Ethiopia and at Dhala in the Protectorate and looks something like a tea bush. The leaves are chewed while fresh and green and the practice is easily habit forming. The precise effect of the drug on the system is hard to explain, and medical opinion is divided about whether it is or is not deleterious. My own view is that taken in moderation it is, like many other stimulants, innocuous, but taken to excess it can be very harmful. It is expensive and

276 It[1] is expensive Aden and
435 it has been calculated that Qāt costs the addicts in the Colony £2,500,000 a year.

276 The Unofficial Members were not concerned primarily 434 with the effect of the drug on the constitutions of the addicts, but with the economic aspect of the problem. The majority of those who use Qāt are in the lower wage brackets and cannot really afford to buy Qāt without seriously neglecting their 648 family responsibilities. After much careful thought the Asiatic 671 Unofficial Members tabled a motion in the Legislative Council at the beginning of 1957 calling on the Aden Government to take action to prohibit the entry of Qāt into the Colony. The motion was not opposed and in due course action was taken 548 and Qāt was prohibited. However, the Aden Government has 648 no control over the States of the Protectorate and the Sultan of Lahej, through whose territory Qāt from the Yemen and from Dhala must pass to reach the Colony, was unwilling to co-operate with the Aden Authorities. Not only did he place no restriction on the movement of Yemen and Dhala Qāt through his territory but he allowed Qāt from Ethiopia, brought by launch and sailing craft from Djibouti in French Somaliland to which place it had been flown from Ethiopia, to be landed on his coast and taken to Dar Saad on the Colony boundary and other places in his territory. The immediate consequence of the Sultan's action was to turn the village of Dar Saad into one vast Qāt chewing den to which resorted all the citizens of Aden who used the stuff and could afford the transport. Why the Sultan did this dis-service to the Colony is hard to say. He may have been unwilling to annoy the Yemen Government, fearing retaliation along his frontier with that country, or he may have thought that action by him to prohibit Qāt from passing through his territory would result in the Imam closing the frontier, as he has done on more than one occasion in the past, with a consequent loss of revenue to the State from road tolls. On the other hand, he may have felt that the order of prohibition was an unjustified infringement of the liberty of the subject to which he could not subscribe, and was not prepared therefore to do anything to interrupt the supply from any source. Whatever were his reasons the result

[1] [i.e., QĀt. -Analyst]

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

of his refusal to co-operate was to make nonsense of the Aden 548 648
Government prohibition order.

Four months after the ban was imposed some of the Asiatic 548
Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council had second
thoughts and introduced a Motion in the Council to set up a 648
Commission to inquire into the effectiveness of the ban and 671
make a recommendation whether or not it should continue in force. The Commission was duly appointed and has recently produced its recommendations after hearing and receiving evidence from all conditions of people. They have recommended that the prohibition order be rescinded. Personally I regret their decision. I would have preferred to see the ban remain in force with some provision for the supply of limited and diminishing quantities of Qāt to confirmed addicts whose health would be adversely affected by total deprivation. I am sure that the Commission considered this solution but there were probably practical difficulties.

In May of this year following on two bomb-throwing 579
incidents in which twelve people were injured in one of the main centres of population in the Colony, the Governor declared a state of emergency. The purpose of the Governor's proclamation was to provide the police with additional powers under emergency regulations to prevent such acts of violence and to protect the lives and property of the public. Since the declaration of a state of emergency there have been several further incidents; mostly of no consequence, but one, an attempt, fortunately unsuccessful, to blow up the oil pipe-line connecting the Refinery at Bureikha with the bunkering installation at Steamer Point, was more serious. This is indeed a sorry state of affairs and the firm action of the Authorities is more than justified. It is to be hoped that they will have the full co-operation of the public in their efforts to prevent further outrages and to bring the perpetrators of those that have taken place to justice. I have no doubt that the inspiration for these crimes came from outside the Colony and, indeed, outside the Protectorate, though the tools may have been found nearer at hand. I am convinced that this is the work of hired assassins and I should be very surprised to learn that any

579 political party, as such, in the Colony had any hand in these outrages which, if continued, will have disastrous consequences for every single individual in Aden.

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668 In the legislative field there have been two important developments since I left Aden. The first of these has been in the Municipal Committee where, at the recent elections, the electorate returned fourteen elected Members to the Committee. Of these seven are so-called Nationalists, which would seem to be a clear indication that Nationalism is spreading and gaining ground rapidly. This may be correct, but on the other hand I have found in Aden and elsewhere in the world that extremists do not always remain extreme once they have obtained their object which in this case was membership of the Municipal Committee. There are signs that already something of the sort is happening, and provided that the situation is handled firmly but with understanding, there would not seem to be cause for alarm. The moderates are, by and large, rational people and on them must rest the responsibility for restraining their less experienced associates. Let them take their own line in the future as they have in the past and not allow themselves to be influenced unduly by public opinion.

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178 The second and more important development is the fulfilment of the undertaking given by Lord Lloyd in 1956. The proposals for a major change in the Constitution were published on November 11th, 1957, as a Gazette Extraordinary. The proposals provide for a fundamental change in the structures of both the Executive and Legislative Councils. The precise date of implementation has not yet been published, but it would be safe to assume that provided there is no startling and unexpected reaction to the proposals, they will come into effect at the end of this year when the life of the present Legislative Council is due to expire. The reconstruction of the Legislative Council will result in the Unofficial elected Members of the Council having a majority for the first time. There are to be twelve such elected members representing single member constituencies in the Colony, five *ex-officio* members who will be the Air Officer Commanding, the Chief Secretary,

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

the Attorney General, the Financial Secretary and one other 642
Government official and six members to be nominated by the 646
Governor in his absolute discretion. The Governor will no 178
longer preside over the Council, his place being taken, as is
only appropriate, by a Speaker.

The qualifications for electors and for candidates for election 641
are to remain unchanged. This means that there will be no 666
extension of the franchise and no relaxation of the rule which 642
requires a candidate to be Aden born, or if not Aden born, to
be a British subject or a British Protected person who has
resided in the Colony for seven out of the last ten years. A
very wise decision. Nothing could have been more foolhardy
than to have extended the franchise at the present time beyond
its already wide limits. To allow foreign subjects to be elected
as Members of a Legislative Council would be unconstitutional
in any country.

With the grant of an unofficial elected majority it is proposed 647
to appoint five Unofficial Members of whom three must be 642
elected Members to take charge of the Departments of Education, Public Works, Communications, Labour and Social Welfare and the Health Department. They will be known as Members-in-Charge and will be responsible for their respective Departments. Early in 1956 I introduced the practice of associating individual Unofficial Members with Departments of Government with the object of preparing them for just this sort of development. The result is that the present Unofficial Members have gained valuable experience and one can only hope that the electorate, always a trifle capricious even in England, will have the good sense to return at least some of them to the Council at the next election where their experience will be of benefit to the Colony.

The new Constitution will, of course, provide that the 642
Governor shall exercise reserve executive and legislative powers. 643
This is a normal procedure and essential, particularly in a politically juvenile Colony such as is Aden which has had a Legislative Council for only eleven years.

The contemplated change in the composition of the Execu- 642
tive Council is as sweeping as that in the Legislative Council. 645

Aden

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645 The future Executive Council will consist of the five *ex-officio* Members of the Legislative Council and the five Members-in-Charge. The Governor will, of course, preside as he does at present.

ooo The proposals are sound and, indeed, generous. It remains to be seen whether the electorate are wise enough to return rational and honest persons to represent them on the Legislative Council. If they don't they will have cut their own throats, a nasty messy business at any time, and it is no satisfaction to the victims to know that the wounds were self inflicted.

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

Index

Abbas, H.R.H. Saif al Islam, 74, 180
Abdul Karim bin Fadl, H.H. Sultan, 132
Abdullah, Amir (Aulaki), 117, 118, 122, 123
Abdullah, H.R.H. Saif al Islam, 176–80
Abiyan, 92, 134, 139, 147, 149, 156, 157, 218, 219
Abiyan Board, 148–50
Abu Dhabi, Sheikhdom, 144
Abyssinians, 8
Aden: Association, 195–8
  Football Association, 195
  Merchants Association, 202
  Port Trust, 1, 17, 19, 26–35, 184, 187
  Protectorate Levies, 81, 87, 93, 99, 104, 121, 125, 133, 226, 233
  Refinery Ltd., 92–4, 187, 188
  Settlement, 17, 19, 47
  Sports Association, 195, 216
  Yacht Club, 216
Agreement (1951), 76, 77
Ahmad, H.M. Imam, 71–6, 78, 110, 175–81
Aidroos, 192
Akrabi Sheikh, 13
Alawi Ahmad, 52, 53
Ali Abdul Karim, H.H. Sultan, 133, 134, 235, 236
Anglo-Turkish Convention 1914, 36
Arab League, 168, 169
Arabian American Oil Company, 142
Armed Police, 83, 233
Audhali Sultan, 51
Audhali Sultanate, 51, 58, 59, 67, 129–30, 132, 157, 175, 219, 234
Aulaki Sheikhdom, 116, 223
Aulaki Sultan, 125, 126
Aulaki Sultanate (L.), 126
Aulaki Sultanate (U.), 126
Aulakis, 116–27
Awd bin Saleh, Sultan, 124, 125, 168

Badr, H.R.H. Saif al Islam, 177, 179
Bahrein, 173
Bana, Wadi, 135, 147
Bazara, 193
Bedouin Boys' School, 126, 139
Beidha, 121, 127–9, 157
Beihan, Sharif of, 55, 56, 57
Beihan State, 127–9, 234
Belhaven and Stenton, Lord, 98, 99
Besse, M. Anton, 32–5
Bible, The, 7
Big game, 222
Bir Ali, 64, 165
Blood sacrifice, 217
Bombay Government, 16, 23, 57
Bombing, 53
Boundary Commission, Anglo-Turkish, 35, 36
Boustead, Col. J. H. E., 126, 142, 144, 159
British Somaliland, 222
Buraimi, 144
Bureika (Little Aden), 11, 92, 94, 237

Cadman, Lord, 26
Chamber of Commerce, 202
Champion, Sir Reginald, 1, 16
[illegible], 219
Clayton, Sir Gilbert, 67
Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, 153, 157
Colonial Office, 23, 25
Colour bar, 202
Colyton, Lord, 123
Corkill, Dr. N. L., 156
Crater, 11

Dammamis, 129, 130
Dar Saad, 235, 236
Dathina, 120, 234
Dervish, wandering, 31, 32
Dhahr Plateau (Audhali), 69
Dhahran, 57, 142
Dhala, Amir of, 15
Dhala, Amirate, 50, 57, 59, 67, 69, 111–16, 137, 175, 231, 234–6
Duck, 218

East India Company, 9
Education, Colony, 134, 188
Education, Protectorate, 154, 155
Elections, 46–8, 208–11
European community, 201
Executive Council, 35–7, 211, 212, 238–40

Fadl bin Abdul Karim, H.H. Sultan, 132, 133
Fadli Naib, 150, 151
Fadli State, 148, 150, 233
Federation, 164–72, 175, 233
Feisal, Amir, 69
Finance, Colony, 203, 204
Finance, Protectorate, 152, 196
Free Yemen Movement, 72; 75; 196, 197
Front Bay, 8

Ghil-ba-Wazir, 142
Girgarahs, 192
Goode, Sir William, 1, 2
Gordon, Colonel J. de la H., 16
Government Guards, 96, 98, 104, 113, 121, 133, 150, 151, 166, 233, 234, 235
Gray-Turner, Professor, 132

Hadhramaut, Wadi, 59, 152, 157, 192
Hadhrami Bedouin Legion, 99, 104, 127, 139, 142–4, 166
Hadhramis, 193
Haidara, Amir, 112
Haines, Captain, 8
Hajja, 74, 179, 180
Hamid-Ud-din Dynasty, 72–4, 197
Hares, 113, 219, 220
Hartley, Brian, 147
Hasn, Al, 133, 134
Hassan, H.R.H. Saif al Islam, 72–4, 77, 181
Hassan, Wadi, 147
Hassonalis, 192
Haushabi Sultan, 15, 133, 167
Health Service, Protectorate, 153, 155
Himyarites, the, 7
Hodeidah, 69, 71, 232
Holkat Bay, 8, 10
Hussein, Sharif, of Beihan, 127–9

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

000

Index

Ibb, 179, 180
Ibn Saud, H.M. King, 57, 68, 74, 207
Inchcape, Lord, 26
India, Government of, 16, 23, 57
Indian community, 202
Ingrams, W. H., 97

Jedda, 144
Jews, 50, 51, 82–7, 89–92, 202
Jifri, Saiyid Abdullah, 235
Jifri, Saiyid Alawi, 235
Jifri, Saiyid Ali, 122
Jifri, Saiyid Muhammed, 235
Jihaf, Jebel, 50
Jol, 59

Kaff, Saiyid Sir Abu Bakr Al, 157
Kathiri State, 150, 169
Keith Falconer Hospital, 155
Khormaksar, 11, 12, 81, 88, 218
Kuwait, 123

Lahej, Sultan of, 12–14, 59–61
Lahej Sultanate, 13–15, 59–61, 64, 97, 117, 132–4, 147, 149, 152, 154, 159, 197, 221, 234
Lake, Lt.-Col. M. C., 16, 99
Legislative Council, 37–46, 209–11, 235, 238, 239
Lloyd, Lord, 125, 212–14, 238
Lodar, 50, 120, 152
Lugmans, 192

Ma'alla, 12, 185, 217
Macfadyen, A.M. Sir Douglas, 51, 54
McIntosh, Alistair, 120, 121
Mackawee, Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammed A. Q., 18–25, 46–8, 204–7
Mackawees, 192
Maktaris, 192
Menahem Messa, Selim, 83, 86
Mocha, 151, 233
Muhammed Abdullah Ash Shami, 121, 128, 129, 176, 178–81
Muhammed bin Aideroos, Sultan, 135, 136, 150, 151, 234
Muhammed Farid Aulaki, 124
Muhammed Salim Ali, K.B., 16
Mukalla, 97, 126, 127, 139, 140, 142, 154, 156, 157, 159, 167, 168, 225
Mukalla Regular Army, 97, 139
Mukeiras, 51, 52, 88, 128, 131, 152, 220
Municipal Committee, 210, 238
Muscat and Oman, 54, 196
Muscat and Oman, Sultan of, 55, 144, 197
Muslim Association, 195

Nasser, Amir of Dhala, 112, 115
Nasser, President of Egypt, 122, 153, 197, 228, 230
National United Front, 188, 196–8, 212, 213
Nationalism, 198–200, 238
Nejd Markhad, 76, 77
Nejran, 68
Nisab, 124, 125, 129, 168

Oil agreement, 172, 173
Oil exploration, 57, 128, 142, 144
Ottoman Empire, 55, 60

Pakistanis, 202
Perim Island, 11, 54, 232, 233
Petroleum Concessions Ltd., 57, 142
Pigeon, Blue Rock, 219, 221
Police, 81, 84, 85, 93, 94, 190
Portal, Viscount, 52, 53
Portuguese, the, 8, 9

Qara, Al, 133–9

Qasim, H.R.H. Saif al Islam, 179
Qat, 47, 113, 197, 235–7
Qataba, 56, 112, 231
Qatar, 56, 173
Qishen and Socotra, State of, 160, 165
Qishen and Socotra, Sultan of, 160, 168
Quail, 221
Quaiti Armed Constabulary, 97, 139
Quaiti Sultanate, 64, 97, 98, 117, 139–46, 159, 167, 169, 170

Rabizi, 194
Ras Darbat, Ali, 54
Rassassi Sultanate, 52, 56, 57
Red Sea, 11
Reilly, Sir Bernard, 16, 69
Royal Air Force, 81, 100, 102–6, 128, 144, 155–7, 167, 231
Royal Air Force Regiment, 5, 81, 95, 99, 227
Rub-al-Khali, 54, 56–8, 99, 127, 142, 143

Sabeans, the, 7
Safis, 192
Said, 121–3
Saiyun, 150
Saleh bin Ghalib, H.H. Sultan, 140
Saleh bin Hussein, Sultan, 52, 94, 95, 129, 130
Sana, 57, 73, 76, 77, 180
Sana, Treaty of 1934, 66, 69–71, 110
Sanau, 142
Sand grouse, 218, 222, 223
Saud bin Abdul Aziz, H.M. King, 54, 144
Saudi Arabia, 55, 58, 72, 143, 163
Seager, Major Basil, 112, 113
Seesee, 219
Sha'afi As, 62
Sha'afis, 62, 66, 68, 71, 72, 174, 177, 193
Sheikh Othman, 10–14, 88, 185, 224, 225, 235
Sheikh Said, 54, 55, 232
Slaves, 97, 98
Socotra, 160, 168
Somalis, 92–5, 203
South Arabian League, 198
Standing Finance Committee, 35, 48
Suez Crisis, 27, 228–30

Taiz, 71, 73, 76, 78, 110, 176–80, 238
Tawahi, 11, 185, 190
Thamud, 142, 143
Tibban, Wadi, 218
Tihama, 69
Township Authority, Crater, 46, 208
Trades Union, 186–91, 197
Treaties, Advisory, 160
Treaties, Protectorate, 63, 64
Trevaskis, G. K. N., 163
Tribal Guards, 96–8, 112, 113, 234
Turkish Empire, 56, 64, 66
Turks, The, 7, 8, 13–15, 60, 61

United Arab Republic, 230, 231

Wahidi, State, 139
Wahidi Sultan, 160, 169
Wazir, Al, 72–3

Yafa, 56, 58
Yafa, Lower, 134–9, 148, 149
Yafa, Lower, Sultan of, 134, 136–8, 150
Yafa, Upper, 64, 111, 151
Yahya Hirsi, 235
Yahya, H.M. Imam, 66–72
Yemen, Imam of, 8, 56, 60–2, 66, 165
Yeshbum, 121, 122, 235
Young, James, 191

Zeidis, 51, 62–4, 66, 68, 72, 73, 176